

DANGANRONPA

A SCHOOL OF HOPE . . . WITH STUDENTS OF DESPAIR!

THE ANIMATION

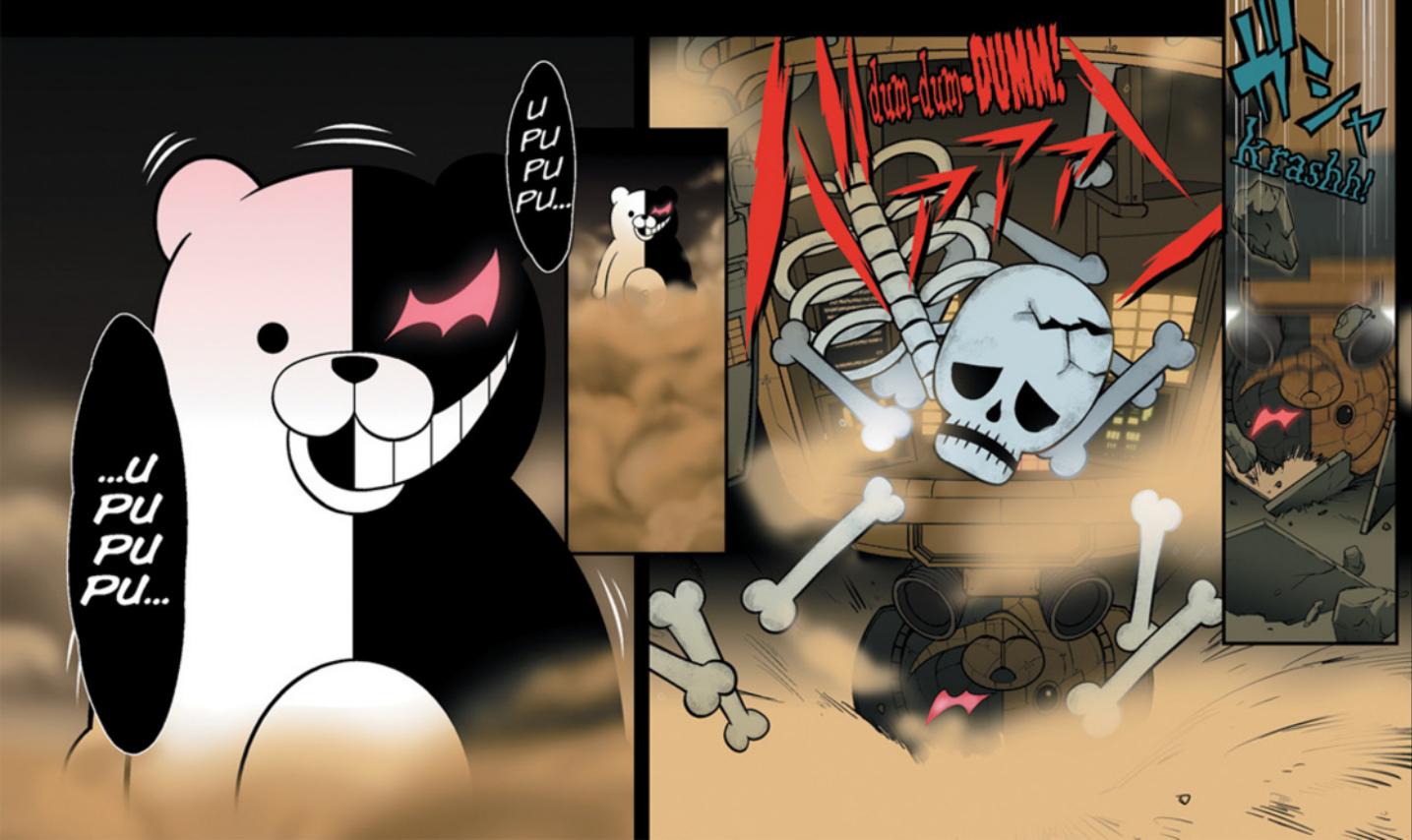
1



created by
SPIKE CHUNSOFT

manga by
TAKASHI TSUKIMI





#01 [WELCOME TO DESPAIR HIGH SCHOOL]



DANGANRONPA

A SCHOOL OF HOPE . . . WITH STUDENTS OF DESPAIR!

THE ANIMATION



DARK HORSE MANGA



CREATED BY SPIKE CHUNSOFT
MANGA BY TAKASHI TSUKIMI

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LETTERING AND TOUCHUP BY JOHN CLARK
EDITED BY CARL GUSTAV HORN
SPECIAL THANKS TO CLARINE HARP, GIA MANRY,
AND SUSIE NIXON AT FUNIMATION

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Hope's Peak Academy is a private school.

As it nurtures and cherishes these young rays of hope who shine upon the future of our nation... it thus truly becomes "The High-School of Hope."

An elite institution with strong government support, Hope's Peak scouts out high school students who rank as the ultimate in every conceivable field of endeavor.

...and tomorrow, I enroll at Hope's Peak Academy.

I'm Makoto Naegi...

WHAT OTHER PEOPLE DO YOU THINK GOT IN...?

I CAN'T BELIEVE MY BIG BROTHER GOT INTO SUCH AN AWESOME SCHOOL. IT'S TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE!

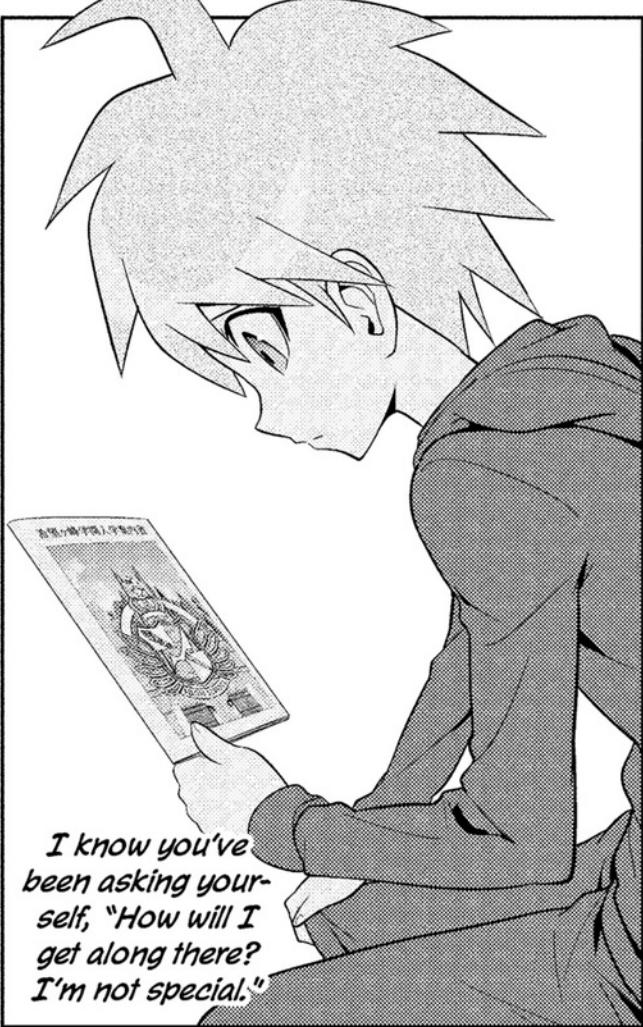
THE "ULTI- THE "ULTI-MATE "ULTI-MATE MAR-MATE BASE-TIAL POP BALL ART-IDOL" STAR" IST" ...

THAT'S WHAT GETS ME... EVERYONE IS TALKING ABOUT THEM ONLINE!

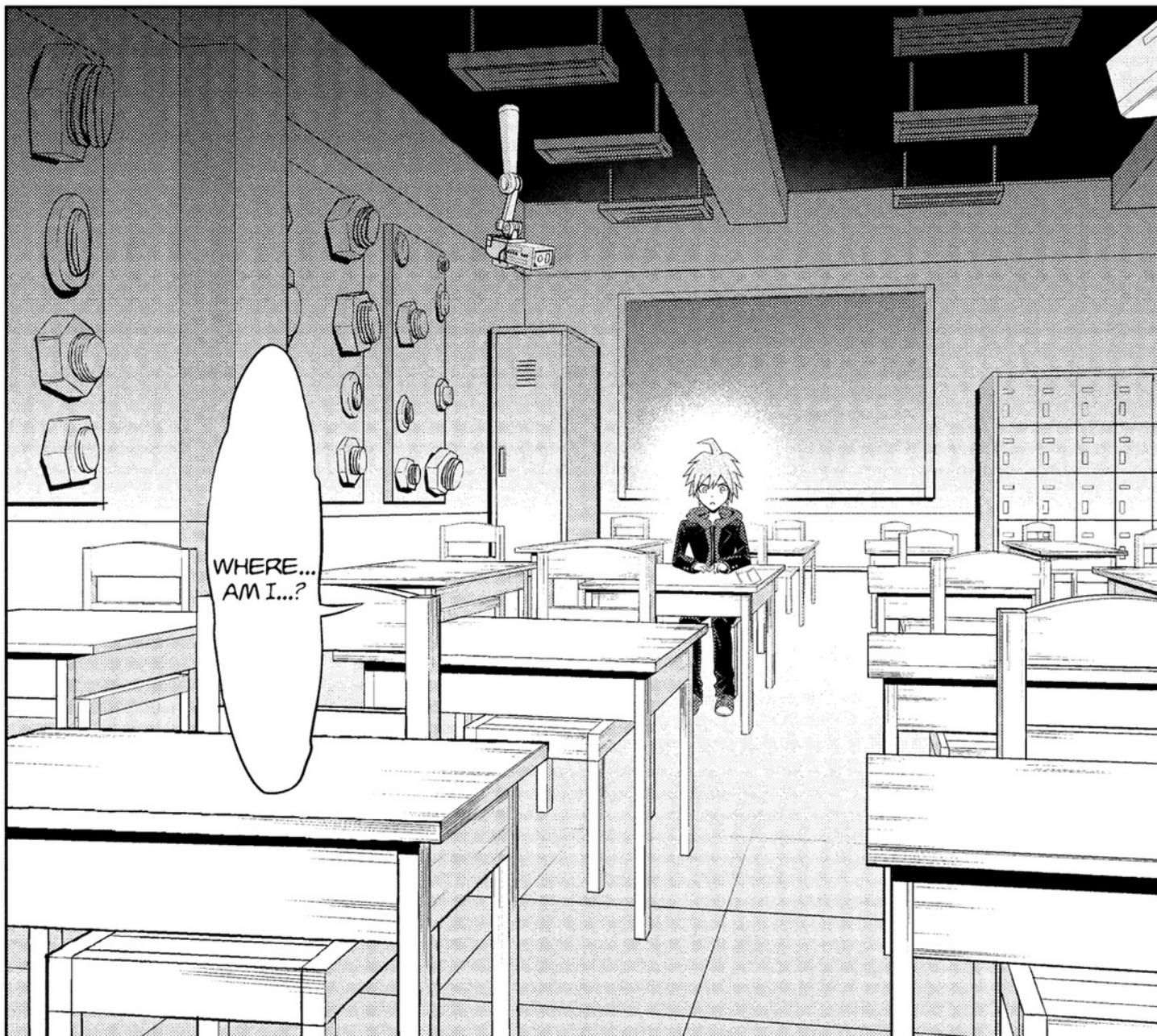
BUT YOU'RE JUST THE NORMAL GUY NEXT DOOR... HOW ARE YOU SUPPOSED TO STAND AGAINST THOSE GIANTS...?

Yurk!









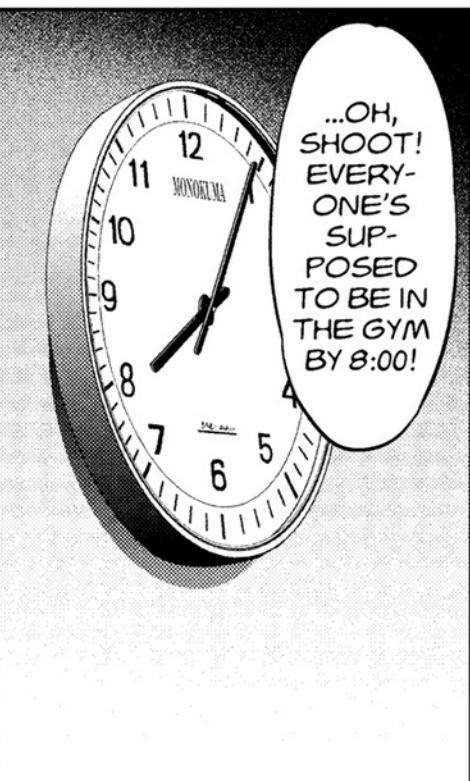
ADMISSIONS BROCHURE

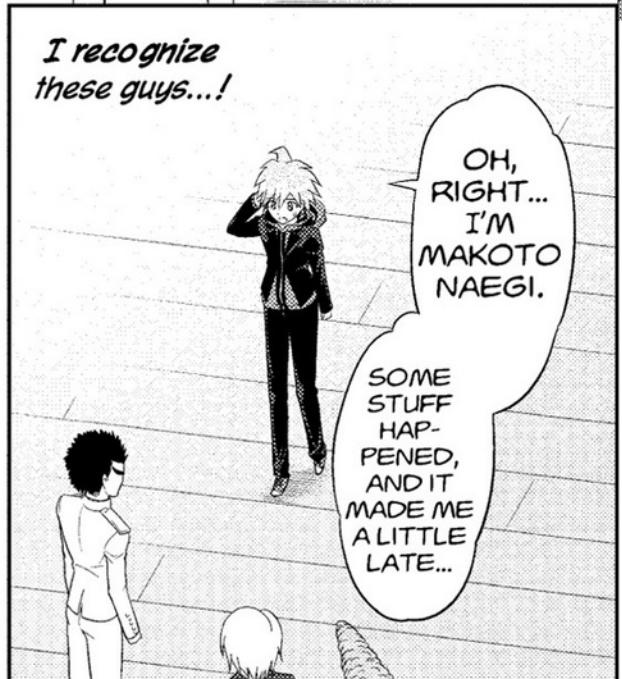
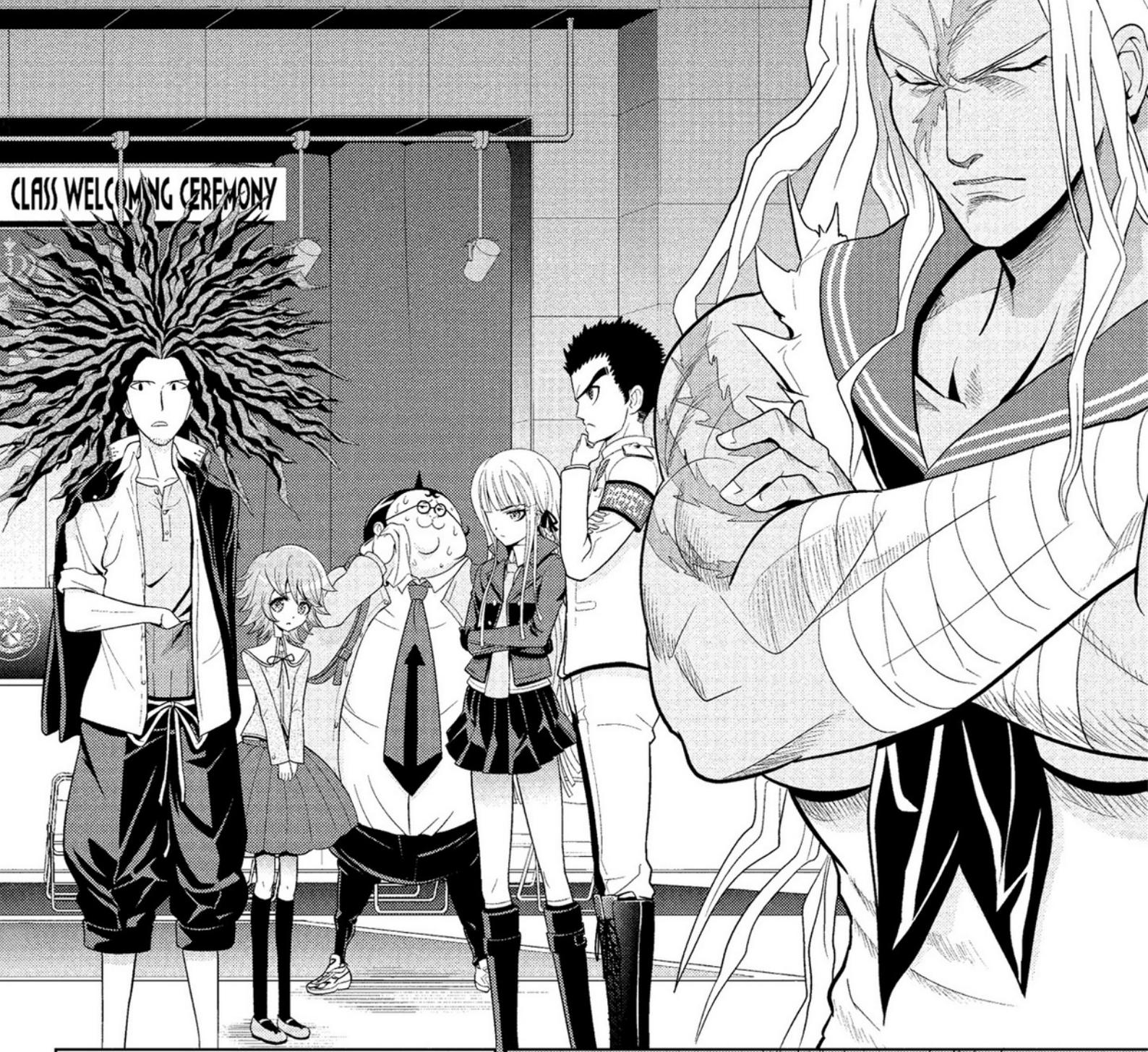
THE SEMESTER HAS JUST
BEGUN! AS YA EMBARK ON
NEW BEGINNINGS, THIS
SCHOOL WILL BECOME YER
NEW WORLD!



...WHO
WOULD WRITE
SOMETHING
LIKE THIS...IS IT
SOME KIND OF
JOKE...?

WHAT
THE...?





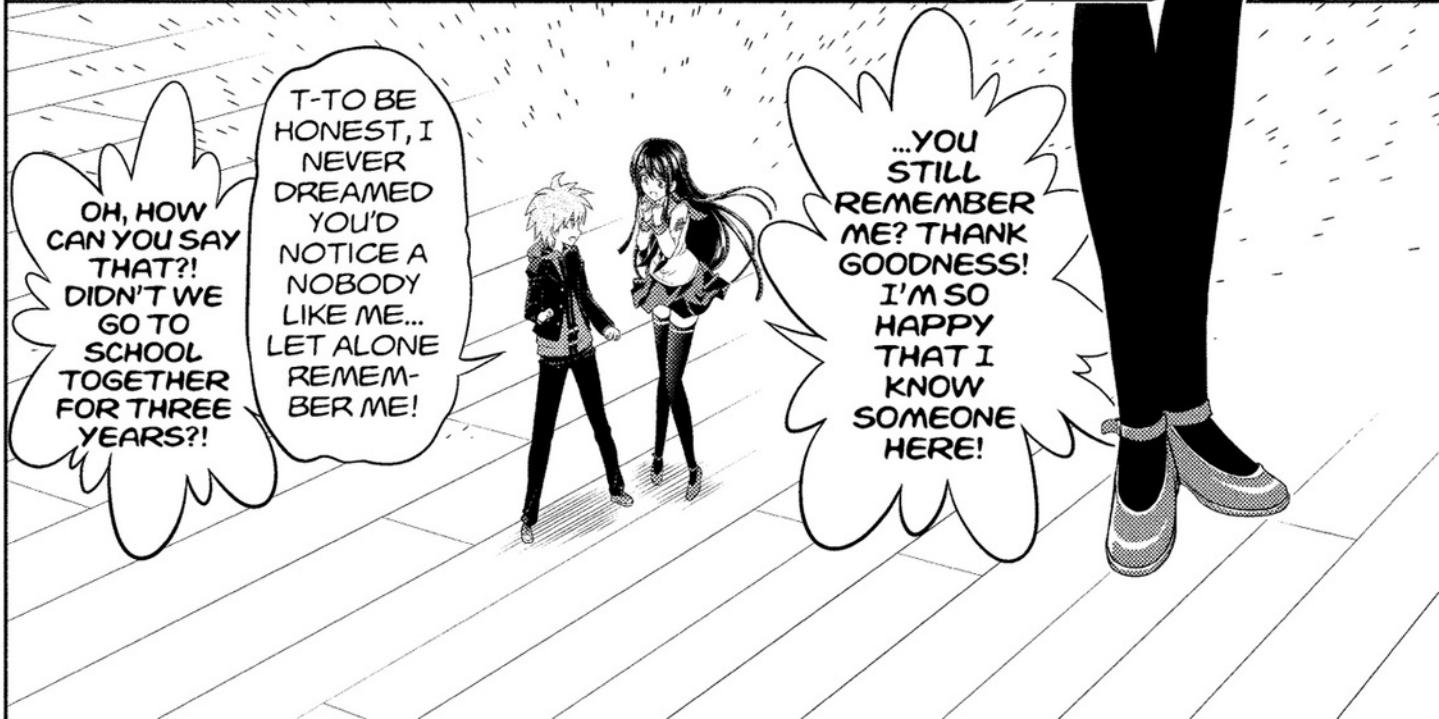
They're just like they described them online...

HOPE'S PEAK 78TH



*...they're
all "Ultimate"
high-school
students...!*



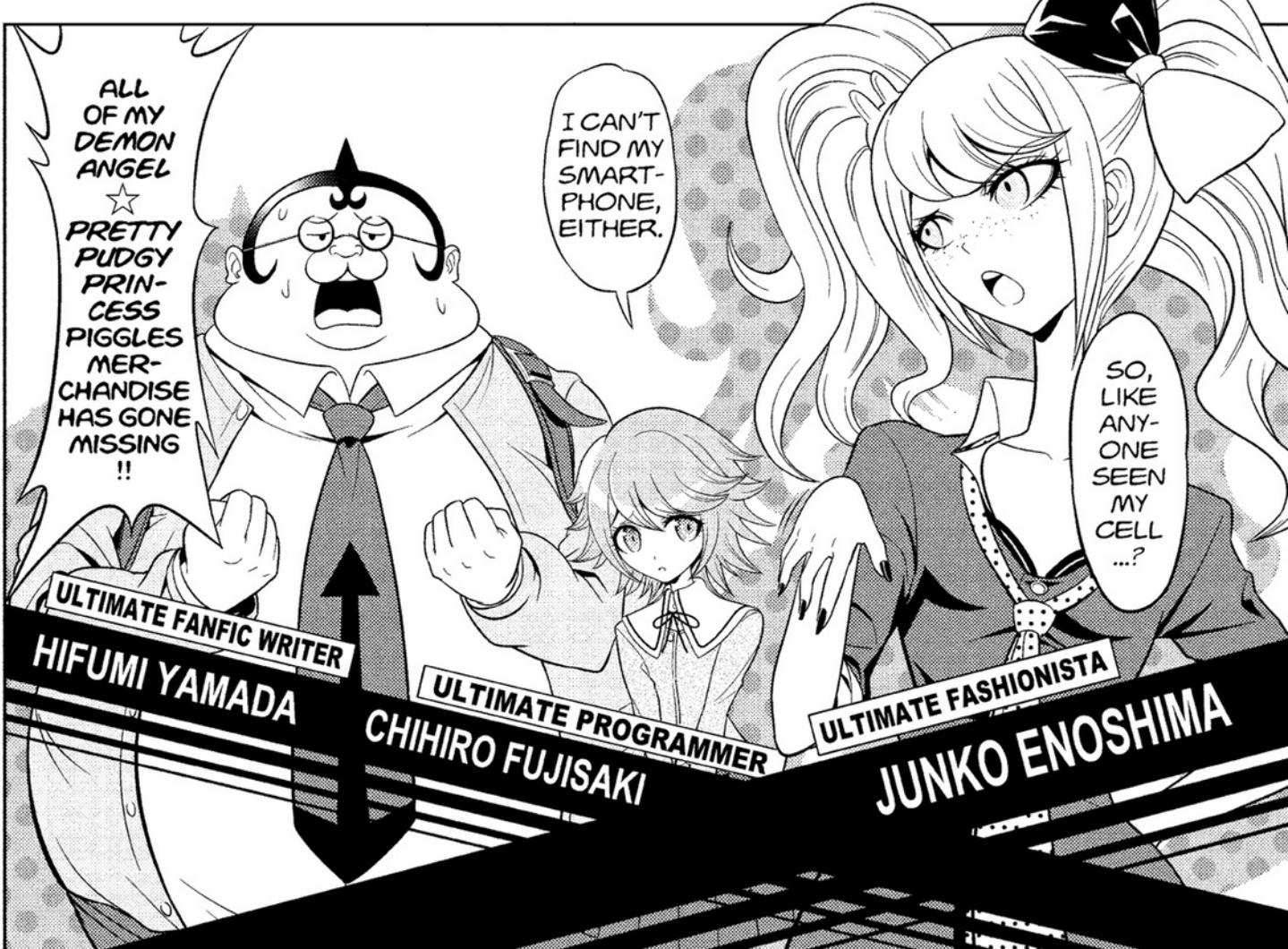
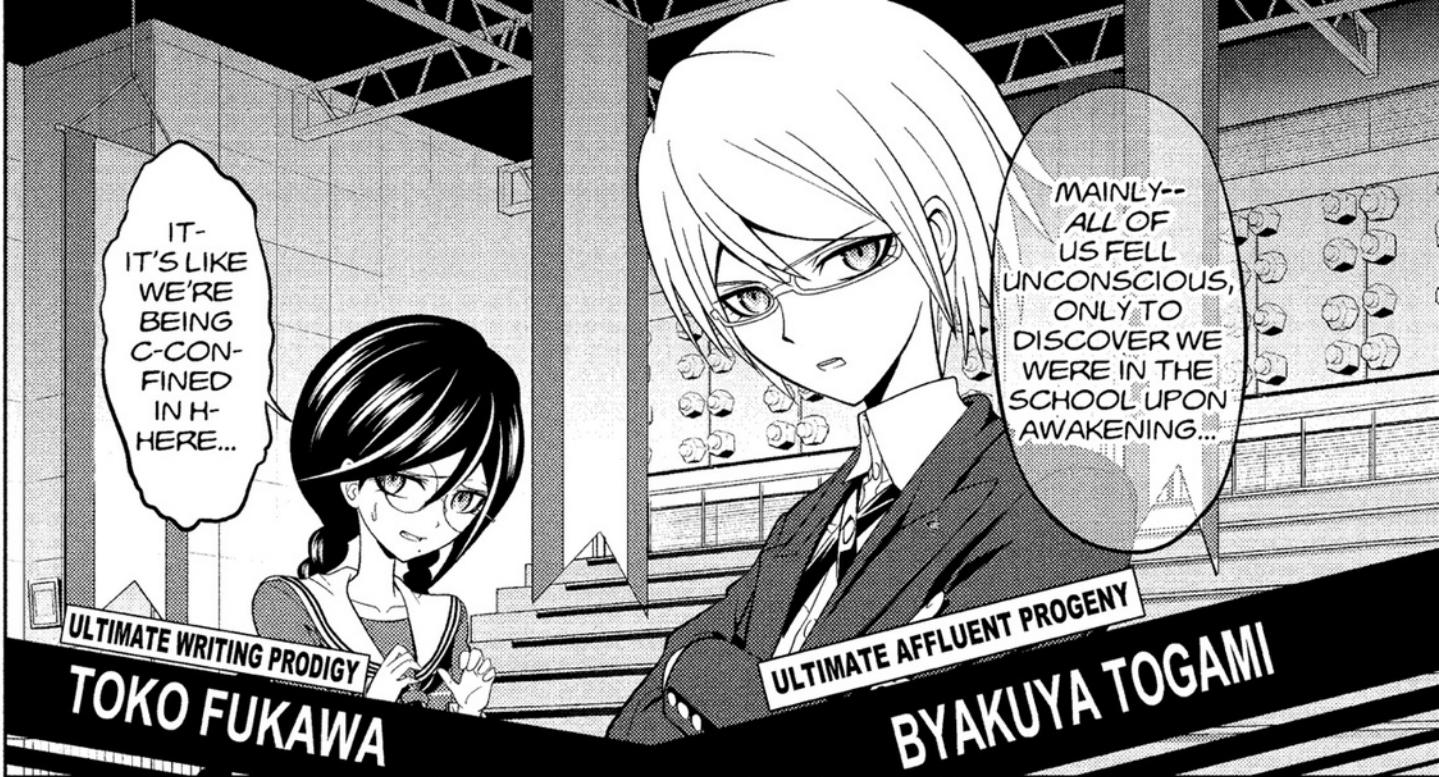


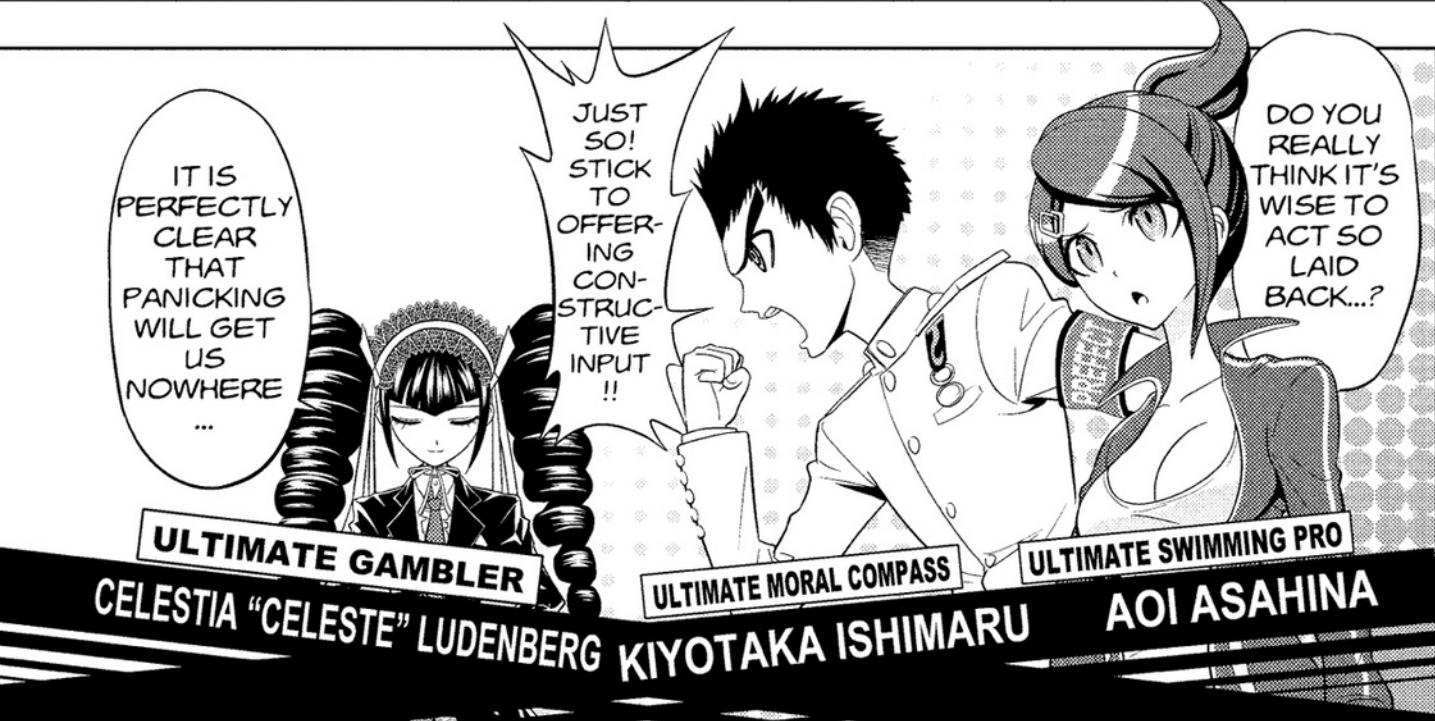
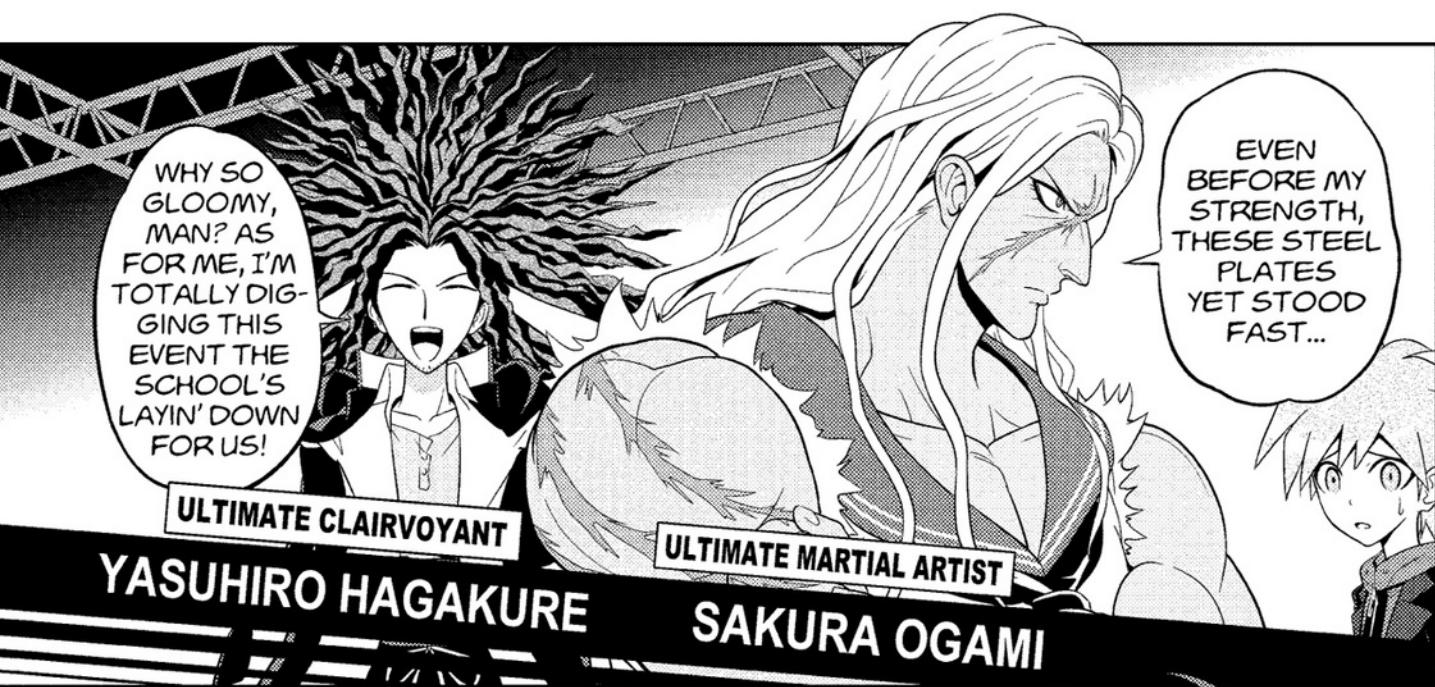
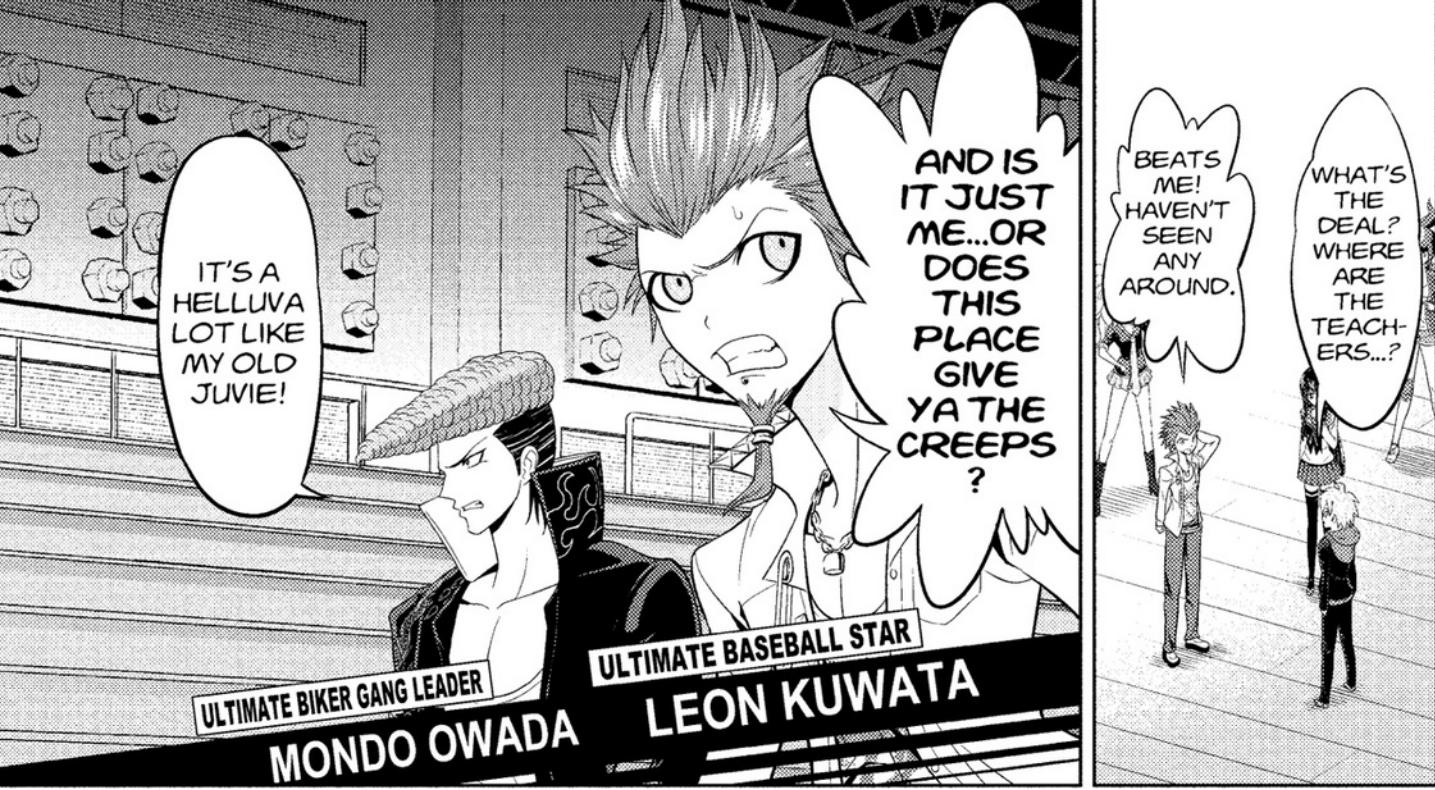
Her skin is so fair...just like a porcelain doll...

Sh-she's so cute...

...it's like she keeps getting prettier by the moment.









DUM-
DUM-
DUM...
DA-
DA-
DA-
DA-
DA-
DA-
DUM-
DUM-
DUM...

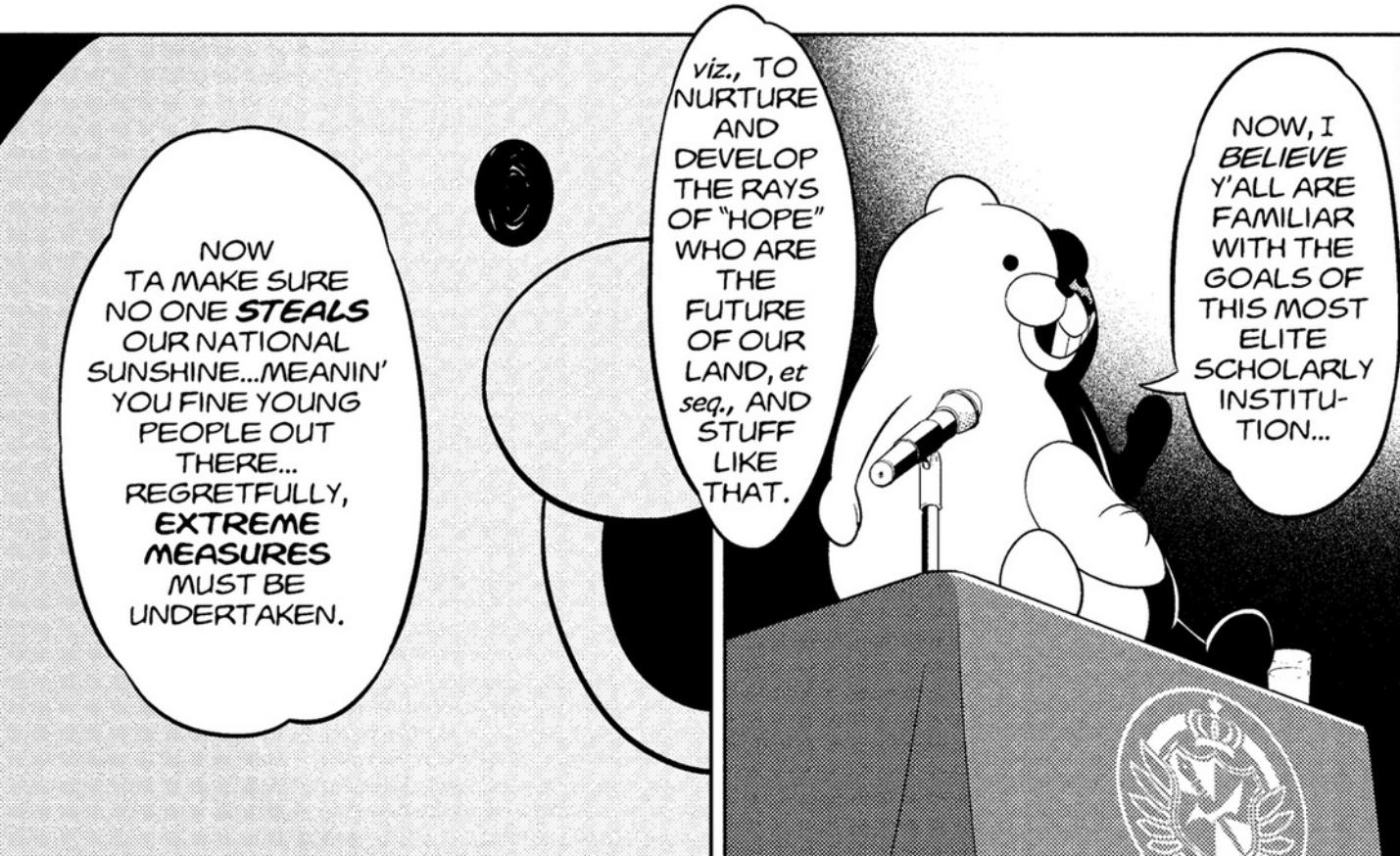
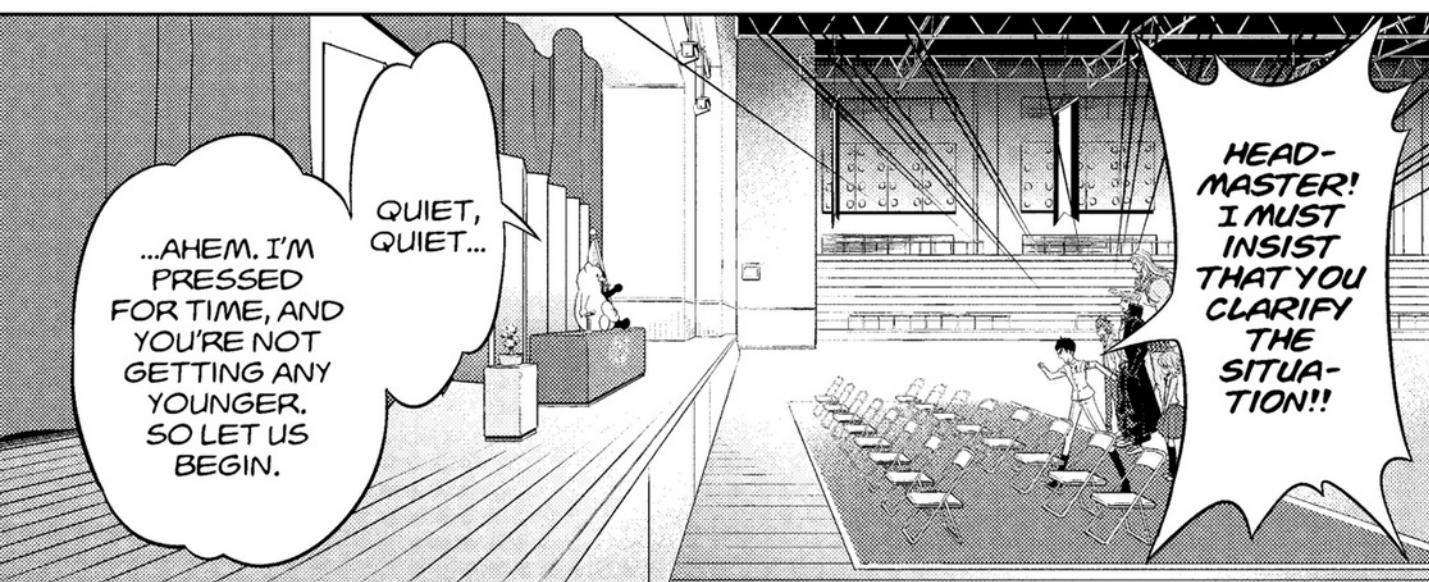
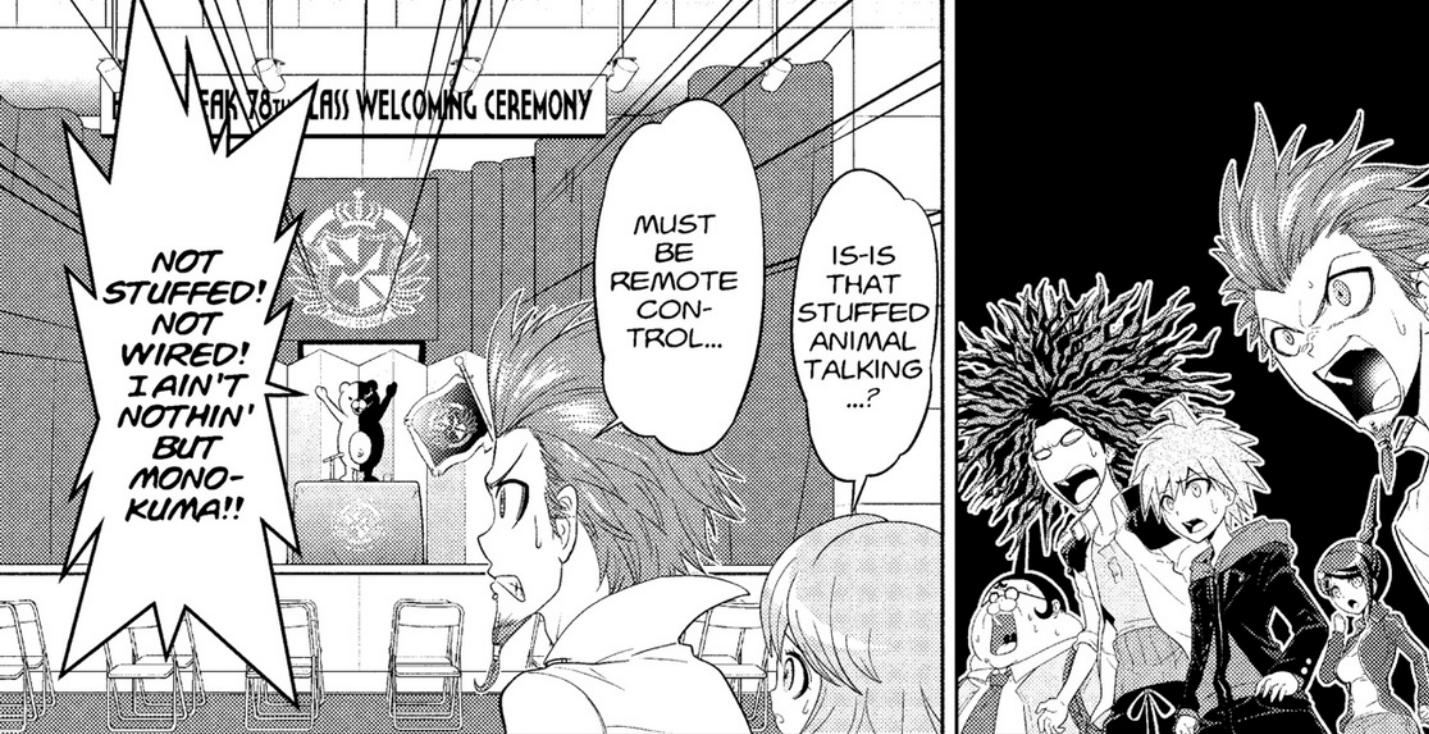
RIGHT!
EVERY-
ONE IN
THE
HOUSE
...?

HOPE'S PENK 78TH CLASS WELCOMING CEREMONY

THEN
LET'S GET
THIS
PARTY
STARTED
!!

MICROPHONE
CHECK ONE,
TWO! CAN
Y'ALL HEAR
ME OUT
THERE?!





AND IT'S
NOT LIKE YOU
CAN LEAVE!
EVERY
ENTRANCE
AND EXIT IS
SEALED,
BOLTED,
PADLOCKED,
AND WALLED
OFF!!

IT'S
NOT AS
BAD AS IT
SOUNDS! WE
GOT FOOD,
CLOTHES,
ENTERTAIN-
MENT,
WARM
PLACE TO
TAKE A
DUMP--
EVERY-
THING
TODAY'S
STUDENT
NEEDS!!

F-
FOR-
EVER
...?

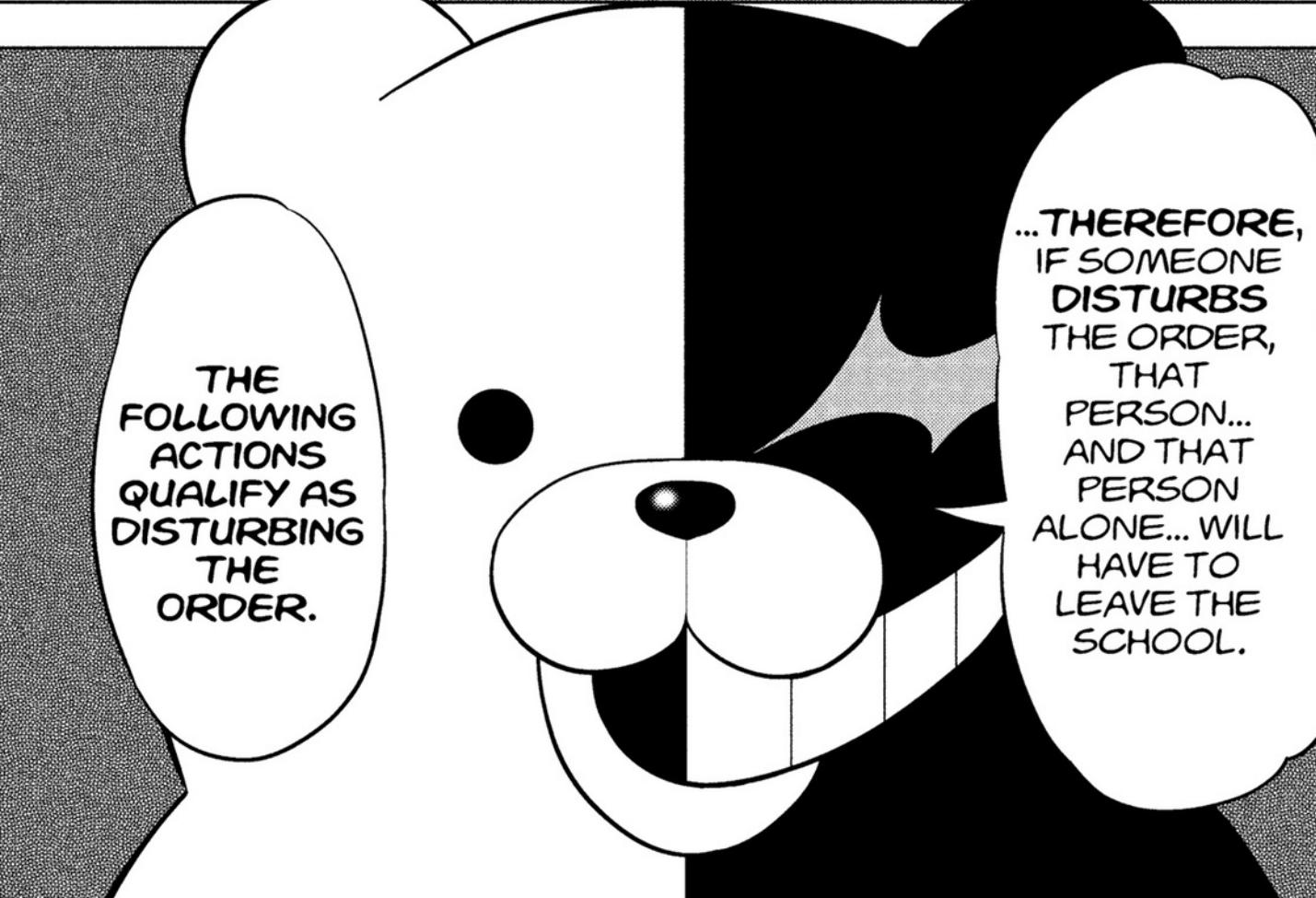
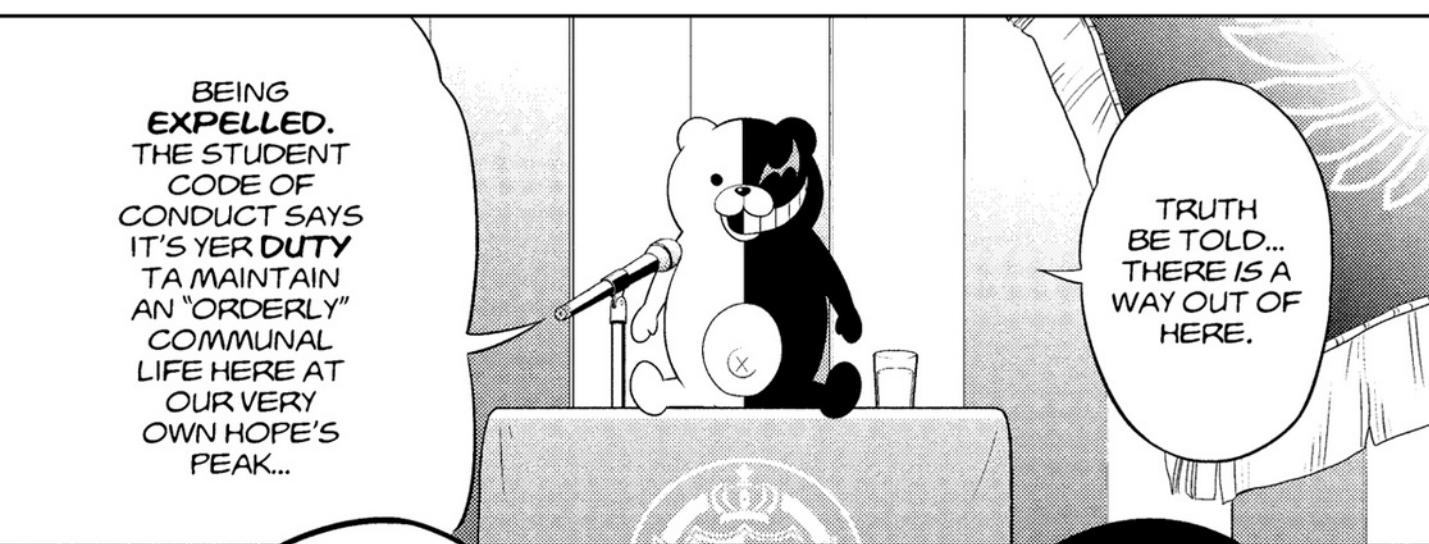
AW,
WHO AM I
KIDDIN'? I
DON'T REGRET
IT AT ALL! SEE,
WHAT I'M
GONNA DO IS
MAKE Y'ALL
LIVE IN THIS
SCHOOL...

I-I
DON'T
BUY
IT...

THOSE
STEEL
PLATES
ARE
MEANT
TO KEEP
US IN....?!

Y-YOU
CAN'T BE
SERIOUS
...!

...FOREVER
!!!





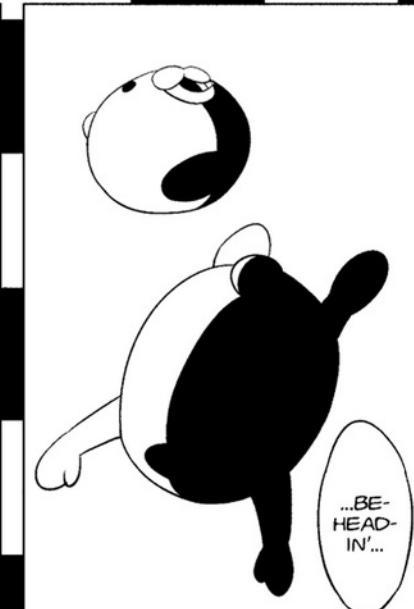
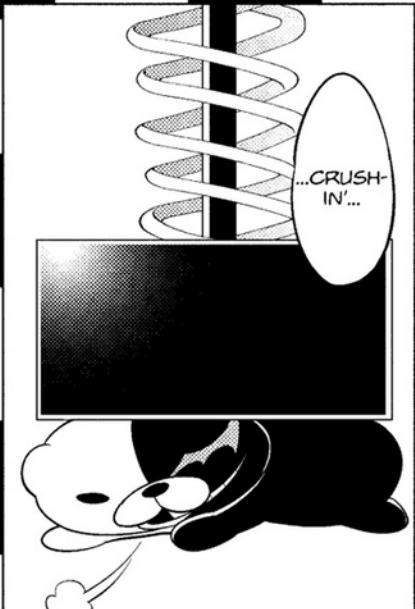
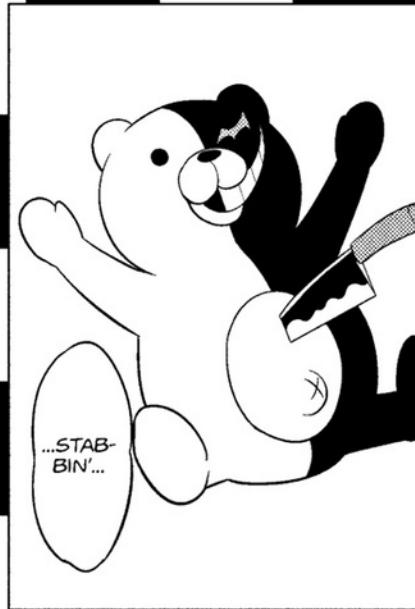
YOU
MUST...

?!
!!

...KILL
SOMEONE
IN THIS
SCHOOL...

IT'S PEAK 78TH CLASS WELCOMING CEREMONY





One of us would have to...do the other in...?!

H-he must be joking...! Kill somebody...?

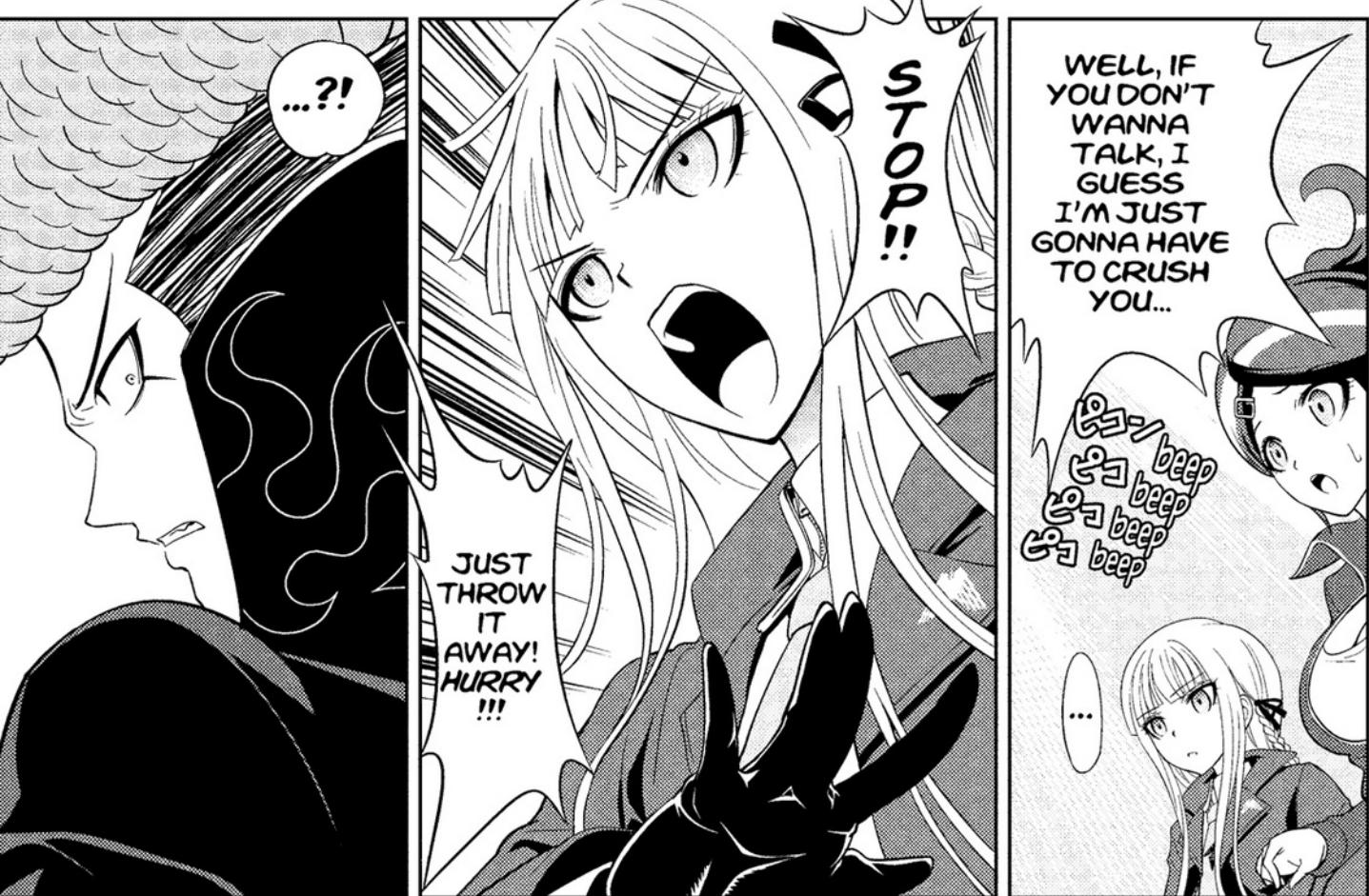
IN SHORT,
YOU ARE
FREE TO KILL
HOWEVER
YOU CHOOSE
!!

ANYWAY,
THAT'S A
WRAP. SO IN
CONCLU-
SION,
PLEASE BE
SURE TO
KILL. KILL,
KILL LIKE
MAAADD!

U
PU PUU...
SORRY.
ALL THIS
EXCITE-
MENT! THE
ADRENA-
LINE...IT'S
A HEAD
RUSH, I
TELL
YA.

THE
ONLY WAY FOR
A STUDENT TO
LEAVE THIS
SCHOOL IS TO
"GRADUATE"...
BY COMMITTIN'
MURDER!







KYAAAAA!!!













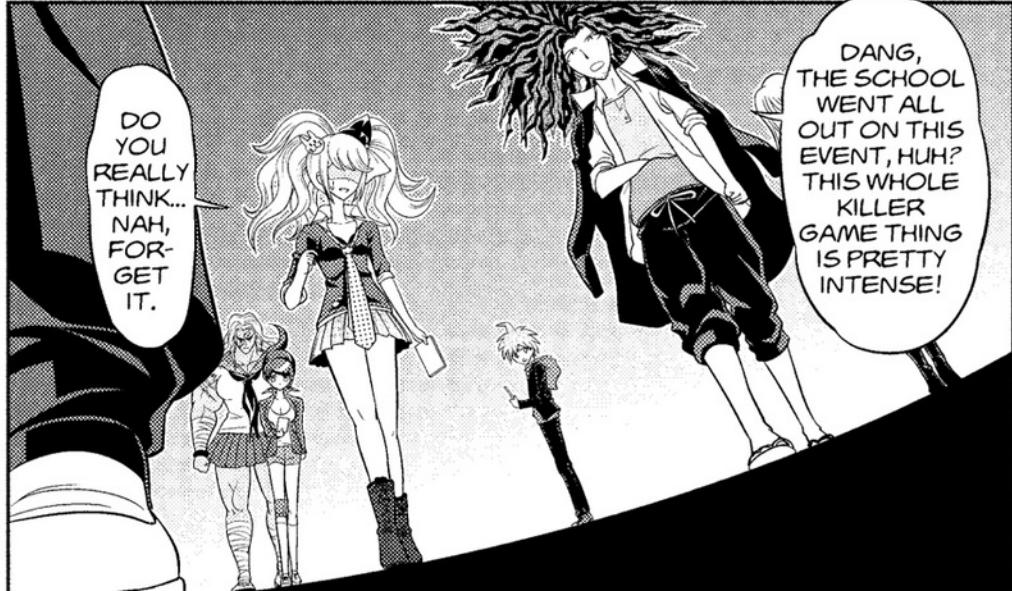
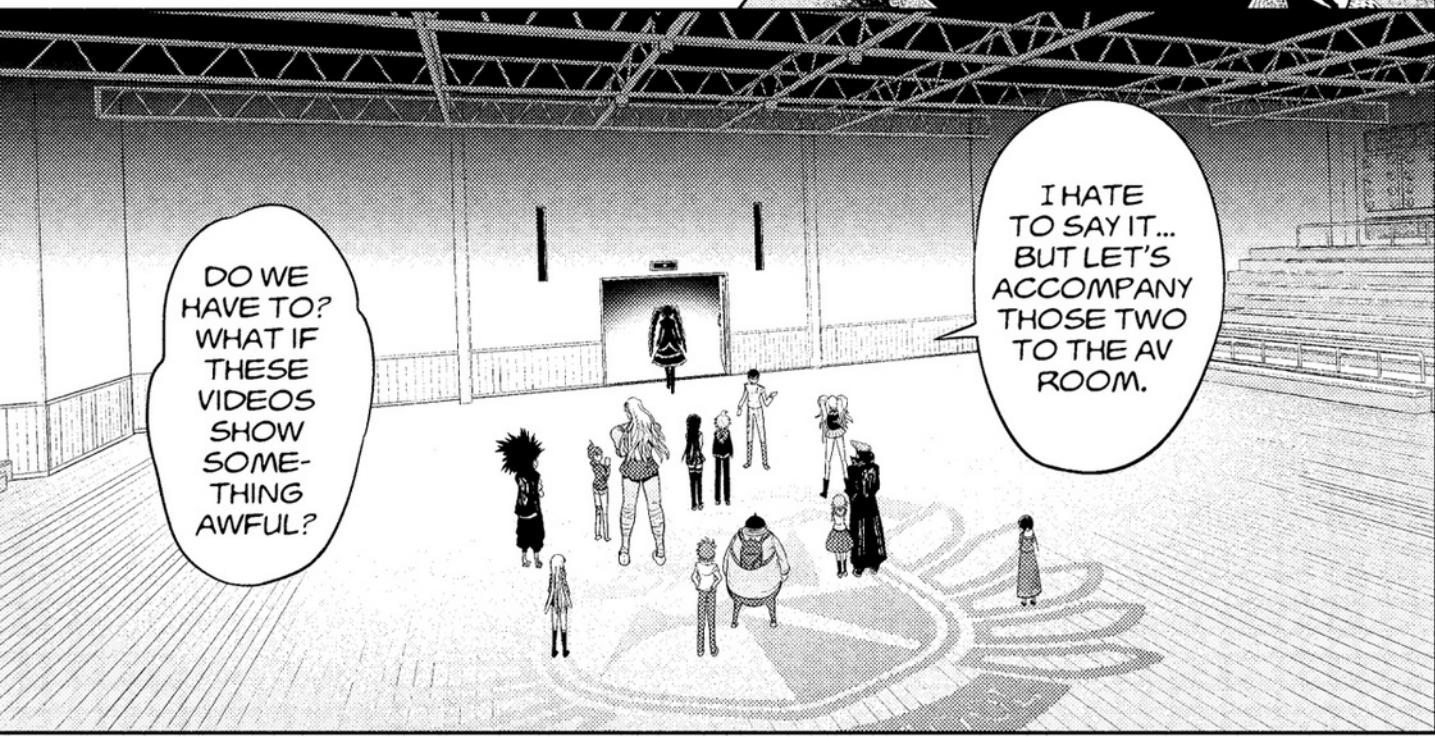
DON'T
MISUNDERSTAND.
YOU AND THE
OTHERS MAY
FOLLOW MY
ORDERS...BUT
THE OPPOSITE
WILL NEVER HOLD
TRUE.

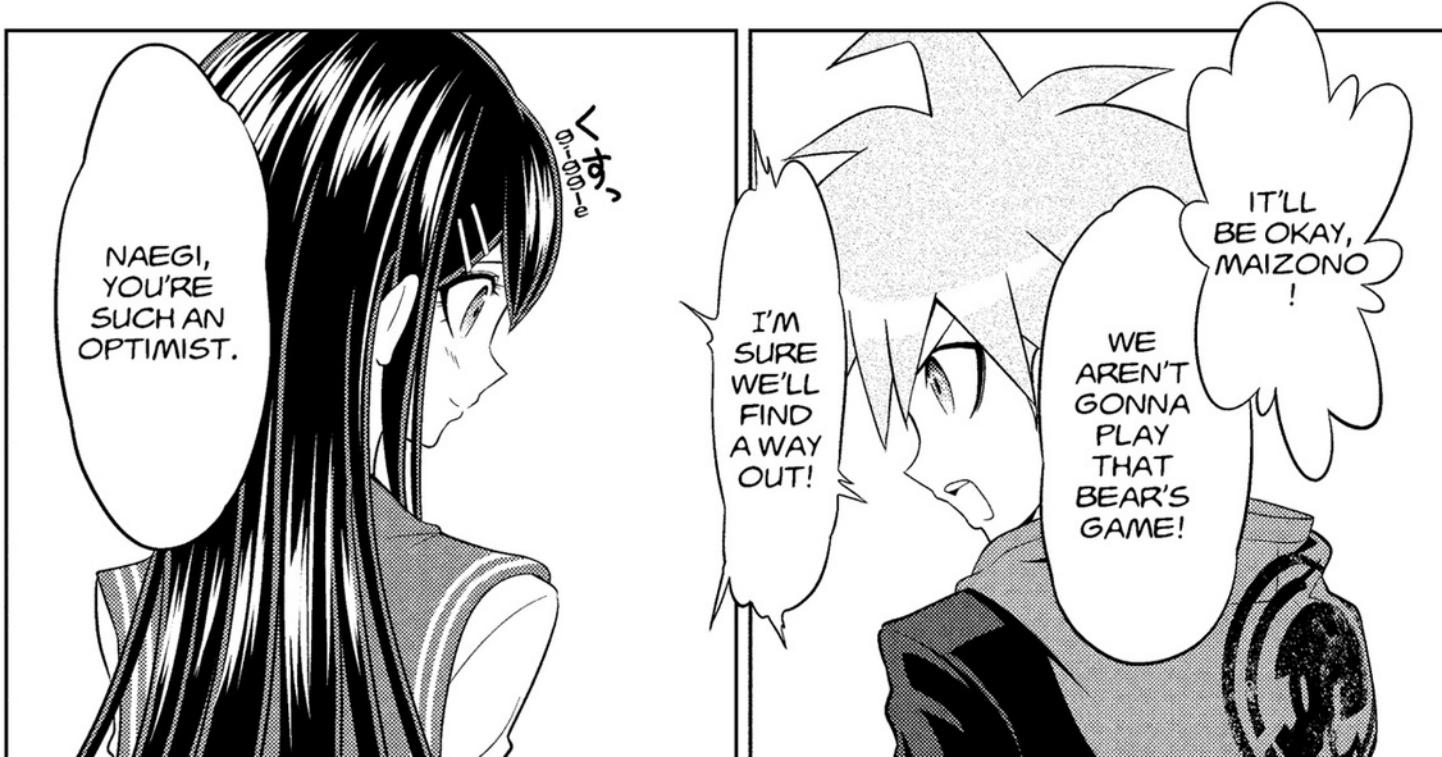
LISTEN...
NEVER
TELL ME
WHAT
TO DO,
COMMON-
ER.

*So cruel and merciless
their message...They
seemed to say..."You
are adrift in these mighty
seas...Nothing you
might do could turn the
waves of this vast
ocean!"*

*T-Togami's
eyes...seemed
as cold as
if he were
looking down
at plankton!!*







WHAT
CRANE
...?

NAEGI,
DO YOU
REMEMBER
THAT TIME YOU
RESCUED A
CRANE BACK
IN JUNIOR
HIGH...?

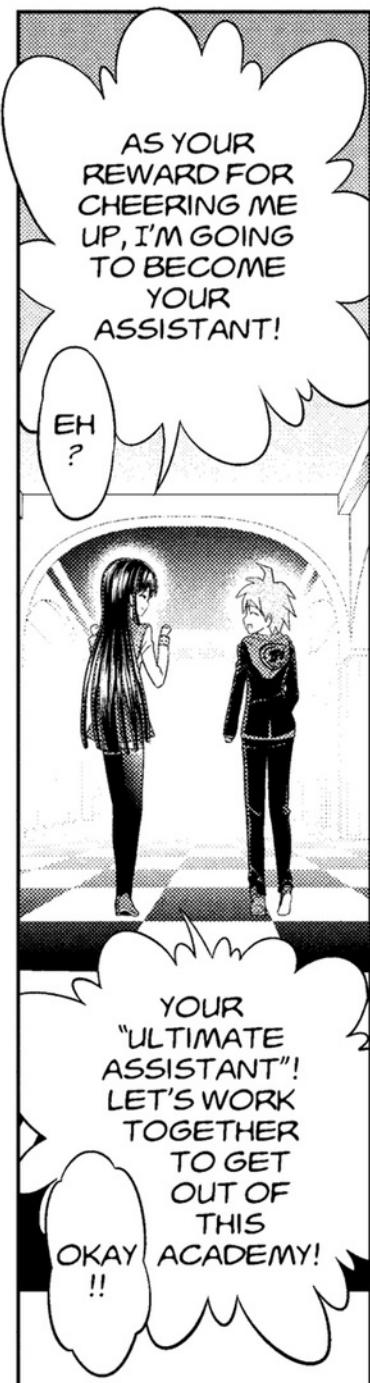
Y-YOU
SAW THAT?
ONE OF THE
TEACHERS
MADE ME,
SINCE I WAS
A MEMBER
OF THE
LIVESTOCK
COMMITTEE...

YOU
KNOW.
YOU WENT
CLEAR OUT
TO THE
WOODS TO
RELEASE
A CRANE
THAT HAD
WANDERED
ONTO
CAMPUS.

I'VE
BEEN
THINKING
ABOUT
YOU THIS
WHOLE
TIME,
NAEGI...

BUT
I WAS
HONESTLY
IM-
PRESSED
BY WHAT
YOU
DID.

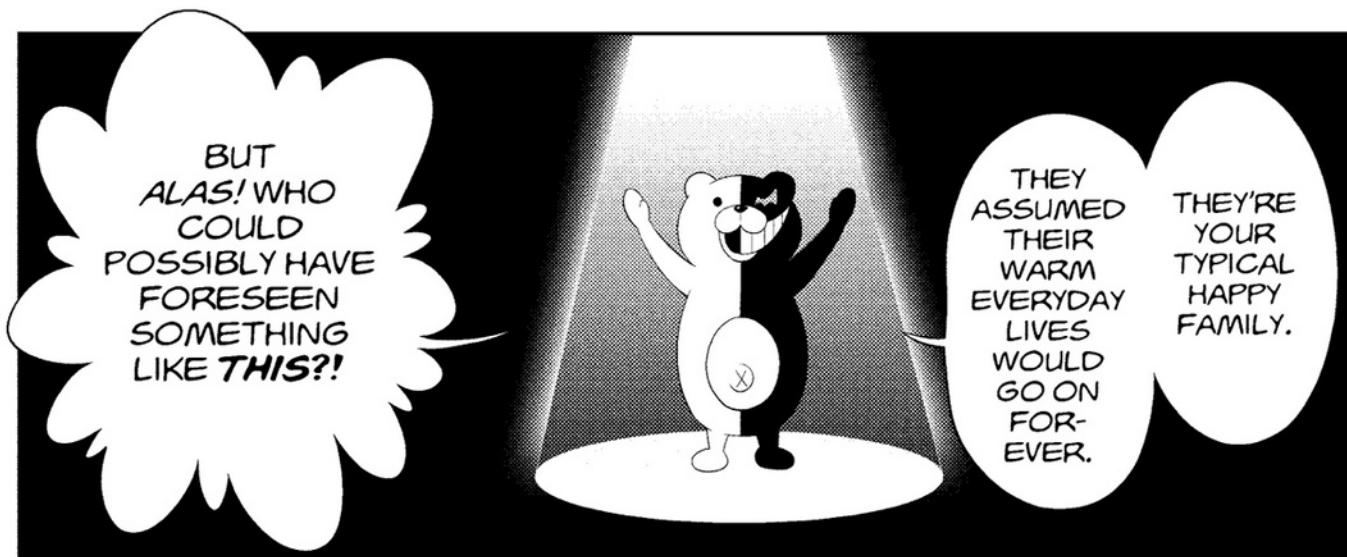
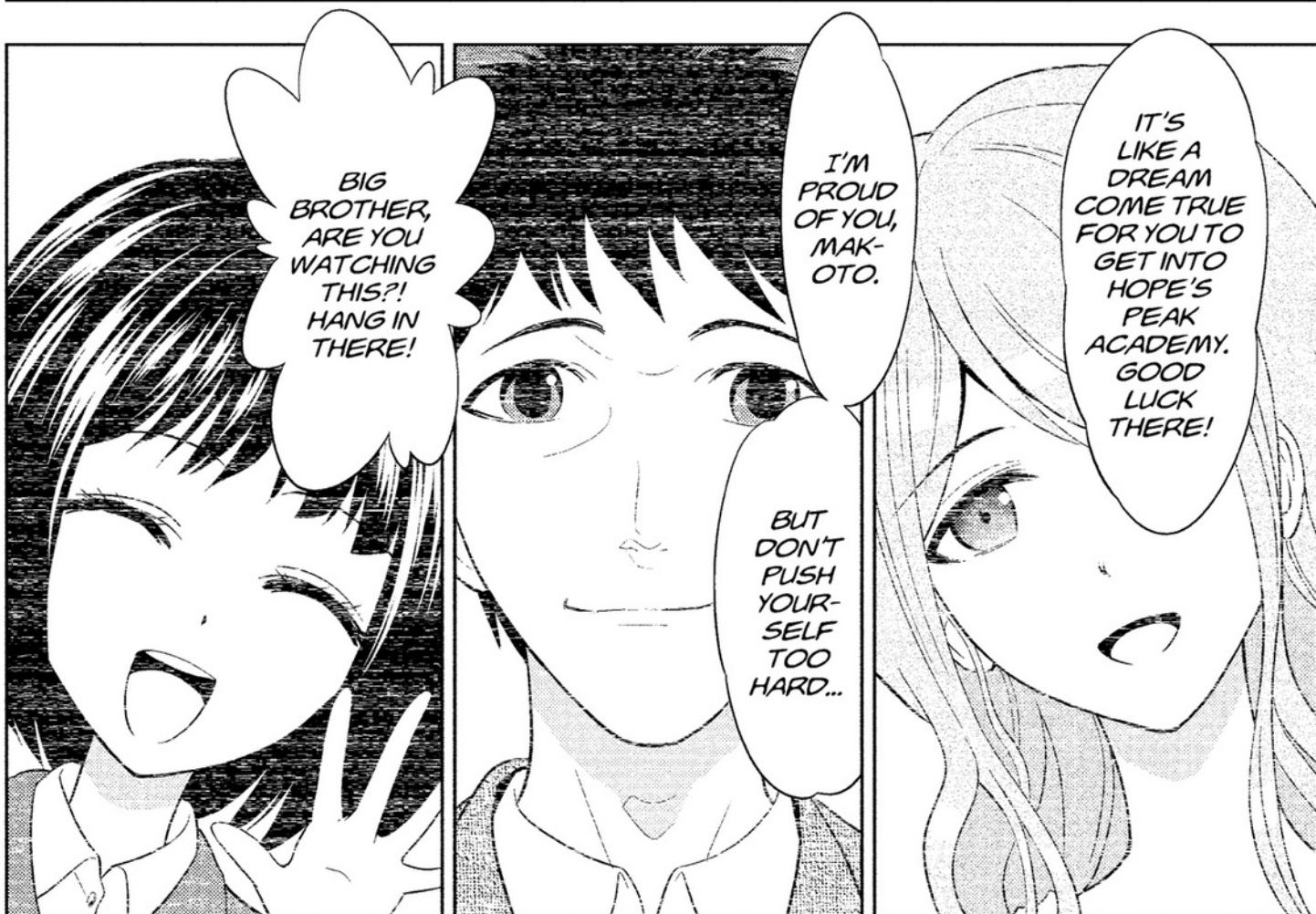
YOU
SEE,
FROM
THAT
MOMENT
ON...

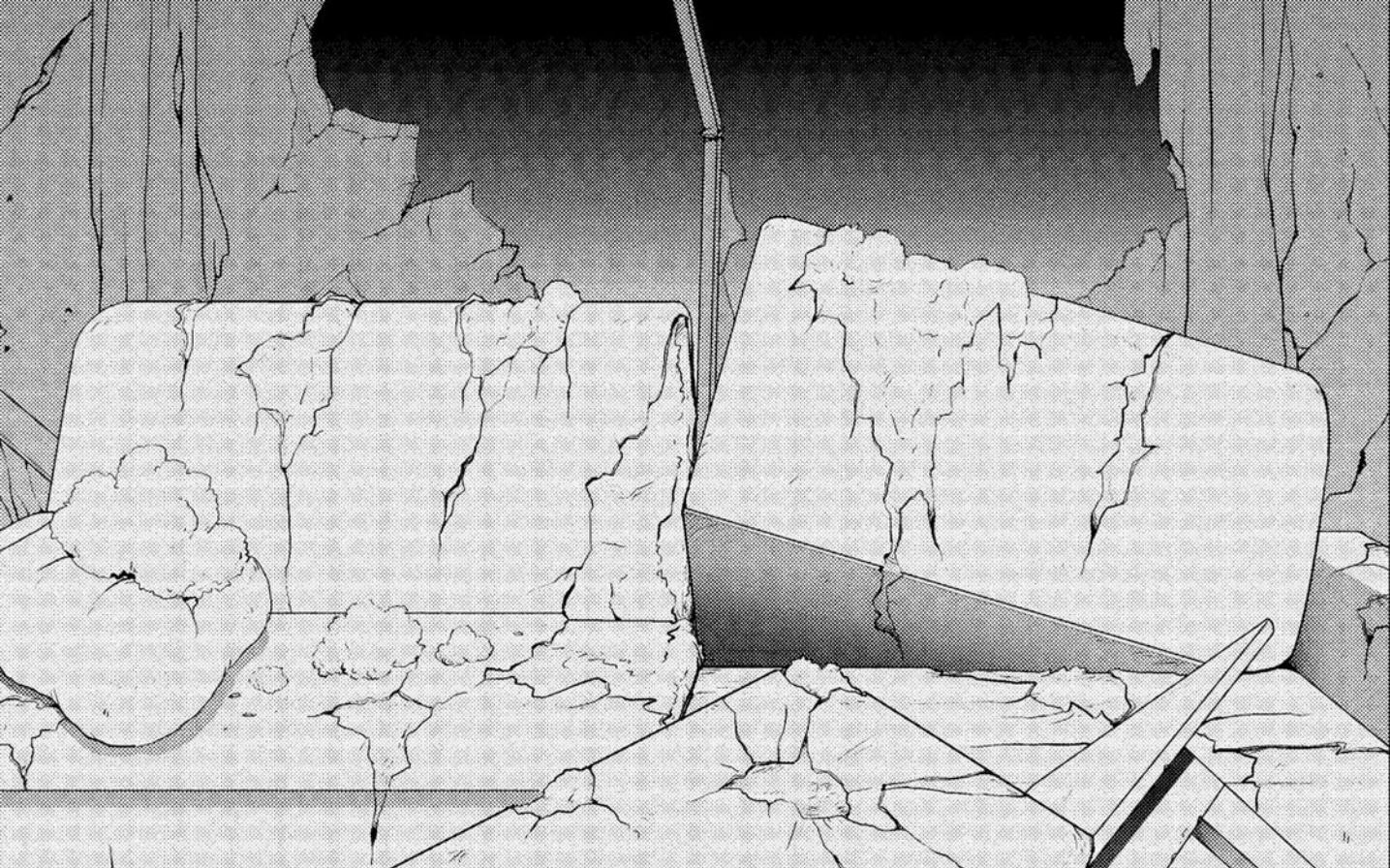






Mom! Dad!
Sis! This was...this
was filmed at my
house...!









IN-
DEED--
I GET
IT ALL
TOO
WELL.

UPU PU!
LOOKS
LIKE
Y'ALL
ARE
FINALLY
GETTIN'
THE
PIC-
TURE.

ARE
THOSE
TWIST-
ED
VIDEOS
REAL
YOU
BEAR
BAS-
TARD
?!

M-
MONO-
KUMA
!!!

TO
FIND
THE
ANSWER
TO
THAT
QUESTION.

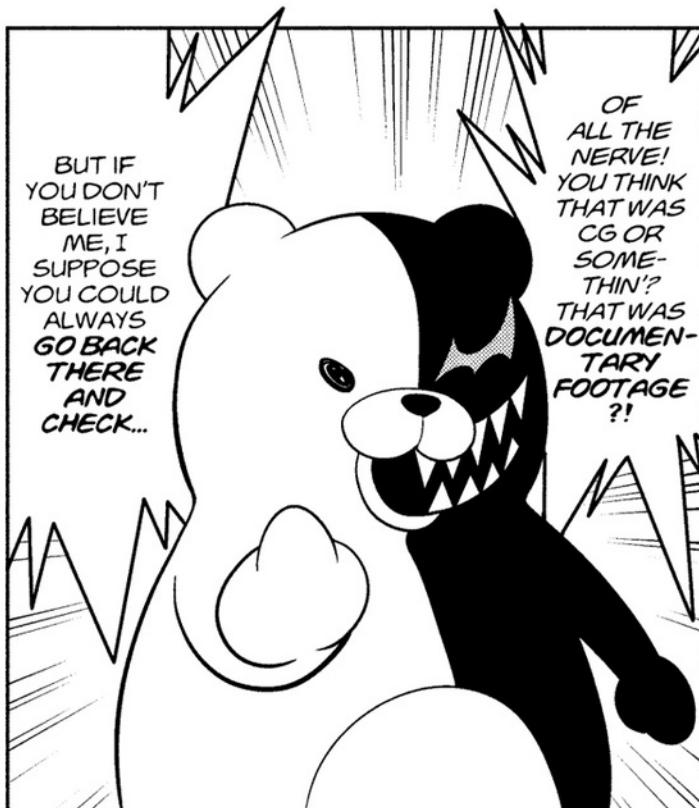
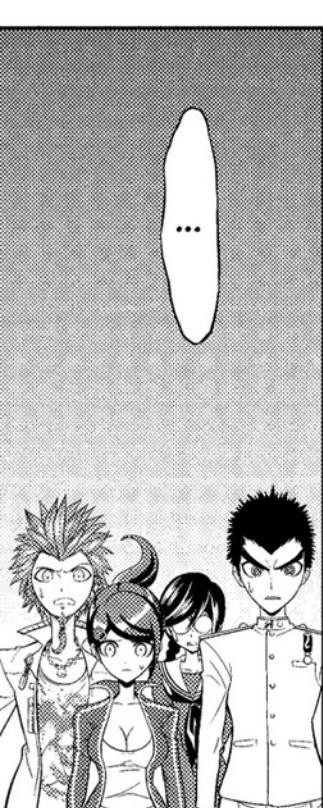
THIS
IS WHAT
YOU CALL
"MOTIVE,"
ISN'T
IT...?

EVEN
IF IT MEANS
KILLING
SOMEONE."

TO
SAY,
"I
WANT
OUT
OF
HERE
...

*...This is how
Monokuma
sets up the
game.*

*He gave
us all our
"motives"...*





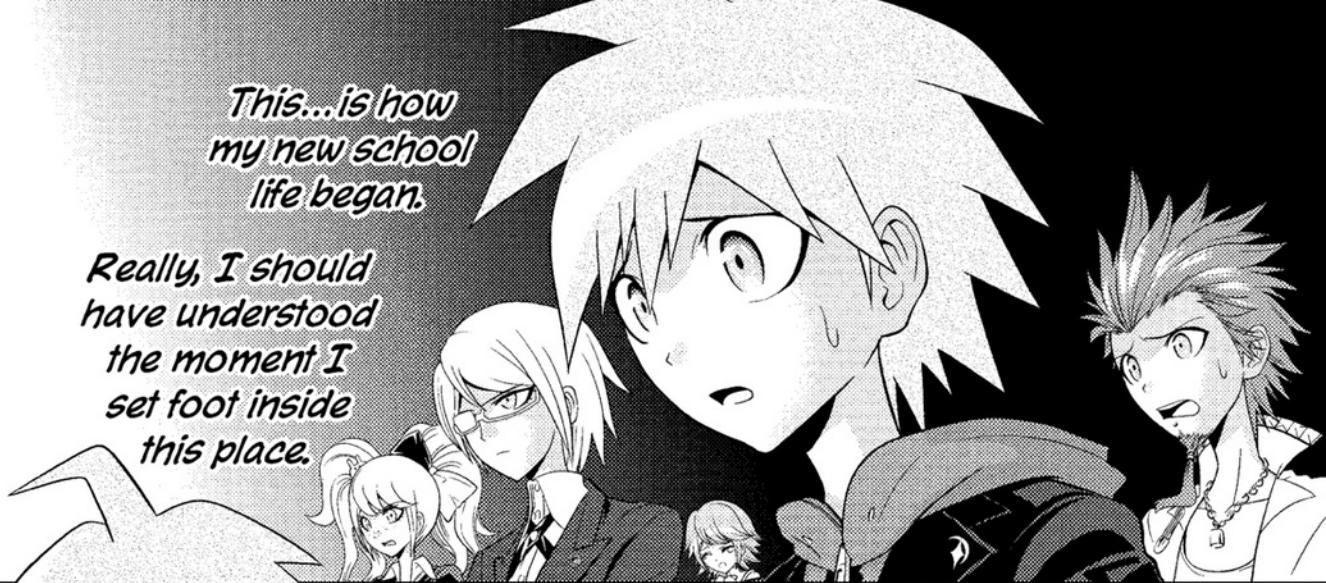
DESPAIR...



...THAT'S
ALL I
WANT.

*This...is how
my new school
life began.*

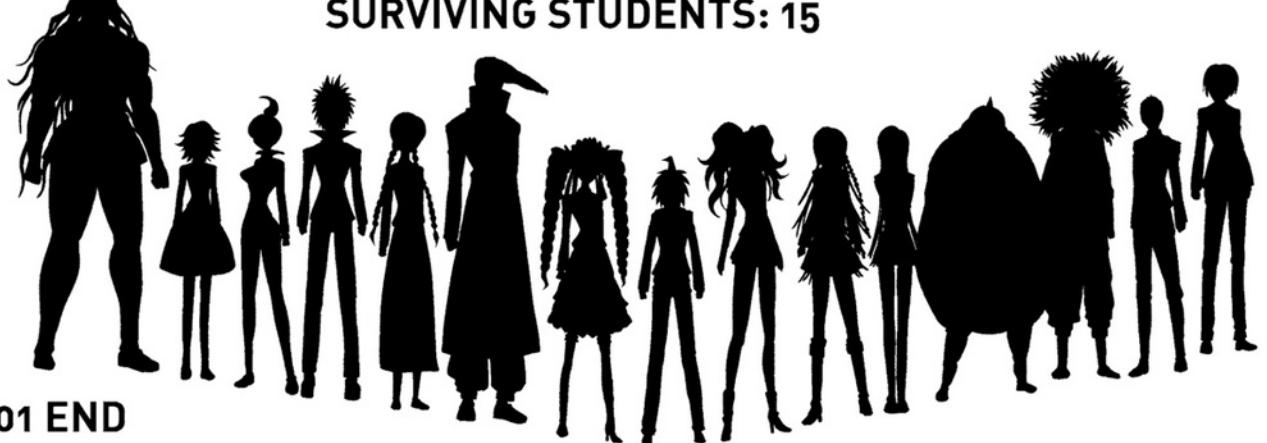
*Really, I should
have understood
the moment I
set foot inside
this place.*



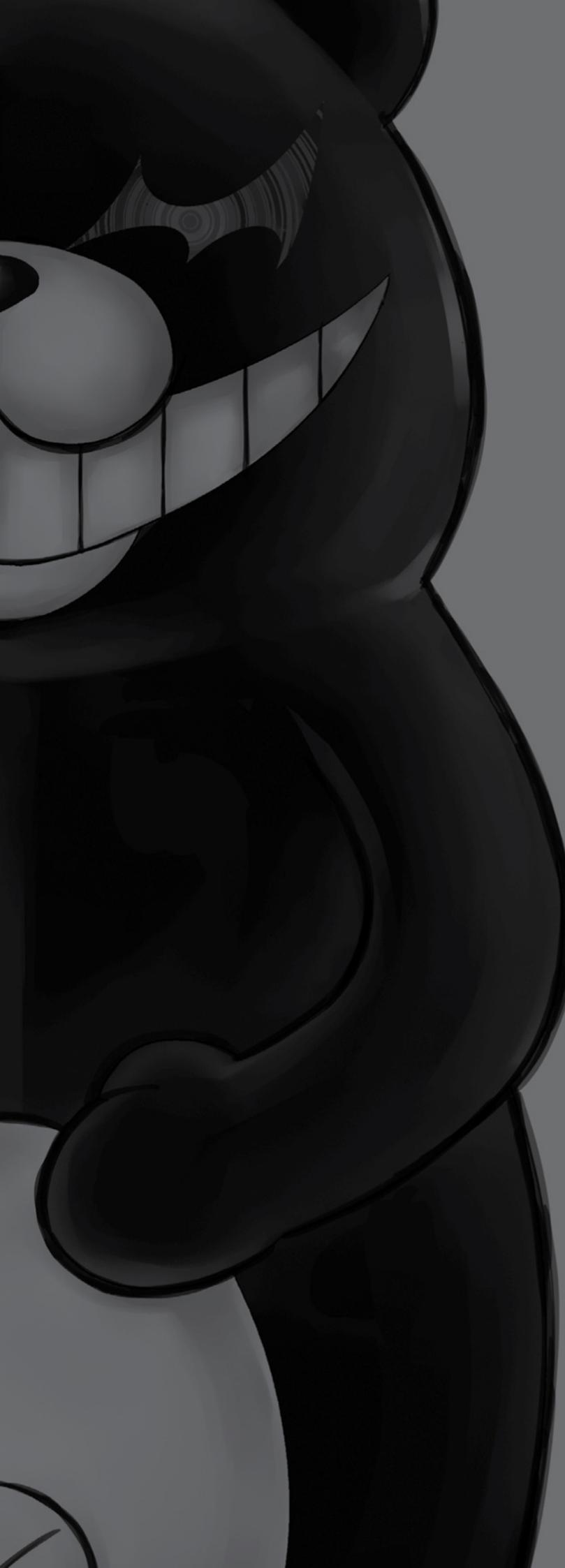
*...but because I
was the ultimate
unlucky one.*

*I didn't come
to Hope's Peak
Academy because
I was the "Ultimate
Lucky Student"...*

SURVIVING STUDENTS: 15



#01 END



ダンガンロンパ
DANGANRONPA
THE ANIMATION

希望の学園と绝望の高校生



DANGANRONPA

A SCHOOL OF HOPE . . . WITH STUDENTS OF DESPAIR!

THE ANIMATION

FILLED
WITH
DESPAIR
YET?

HEAD-
MASTER
MONOKUMA
FROM
HOPE'S
PEAK
ACADEMY
HERE. HOW
THE HELL
ARE YA?

MONOKUMA THEATER

May you
enjoy the
heights of...

IN
THIS
CHAPTER...
A STUDENT
DIES!!!

NOT A
DREAM!
NOT AN
IMAGI-
NARY
STORY!

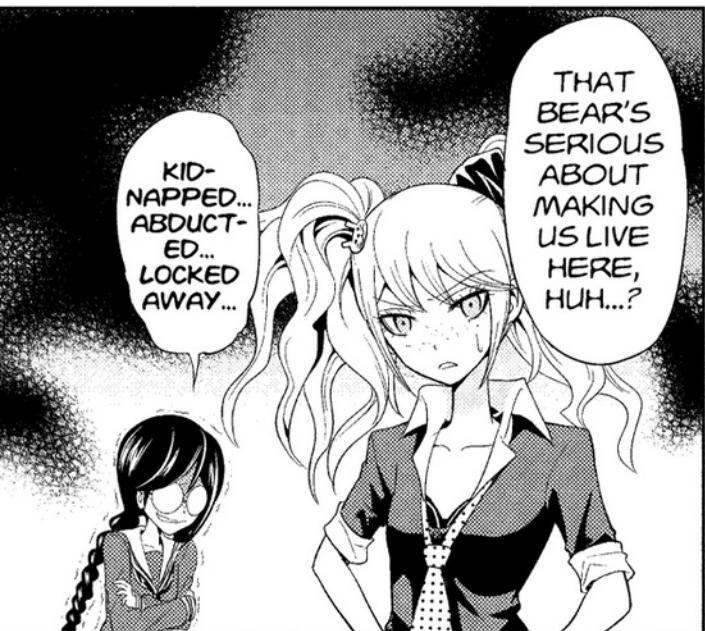
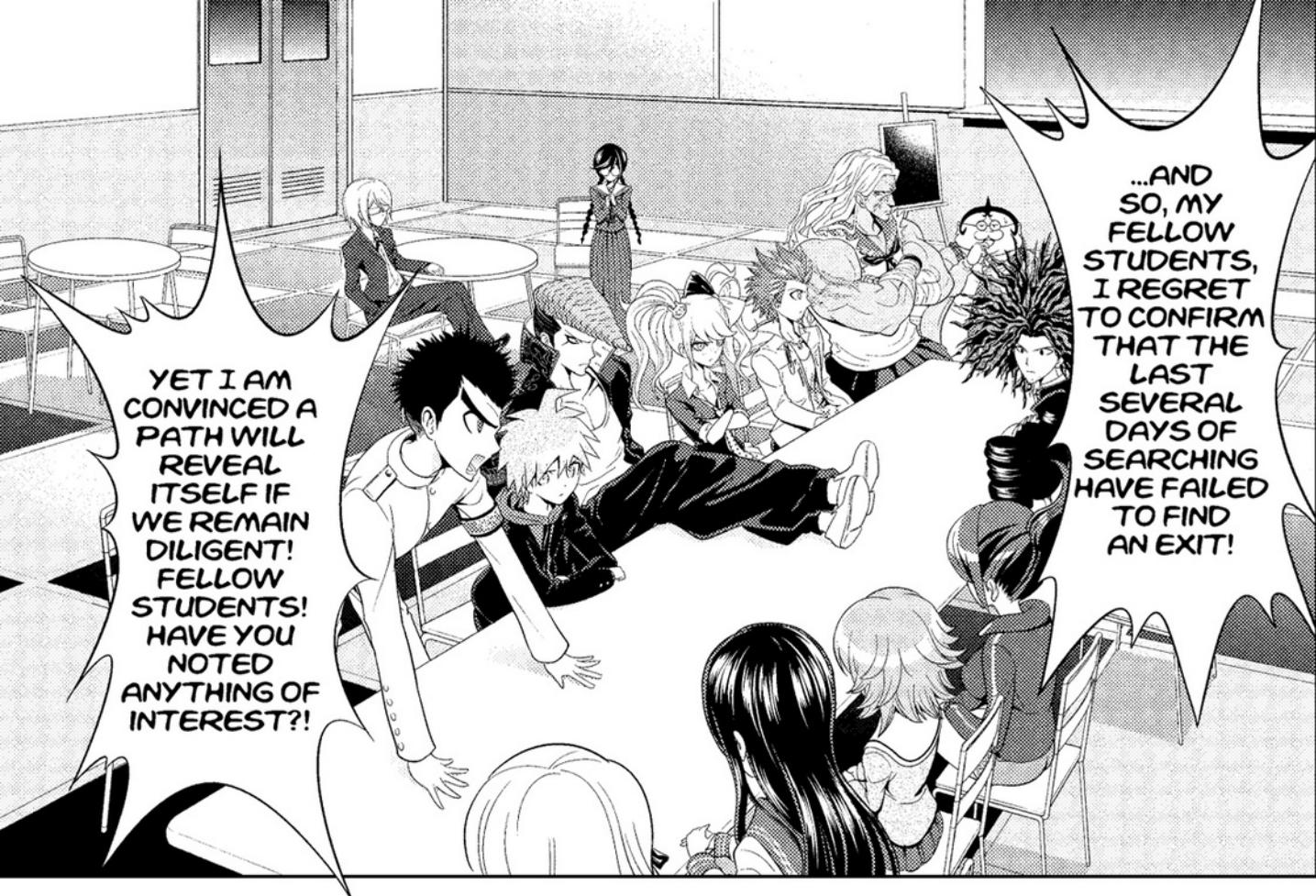
YOU
WILL BE!
LET ME
RECAP. I'VE
IMPRISONED
FIFTEEN FINE
YOUNG BOYS
AND GIRLS.
THE FUTURE
OF OUR
NATION...

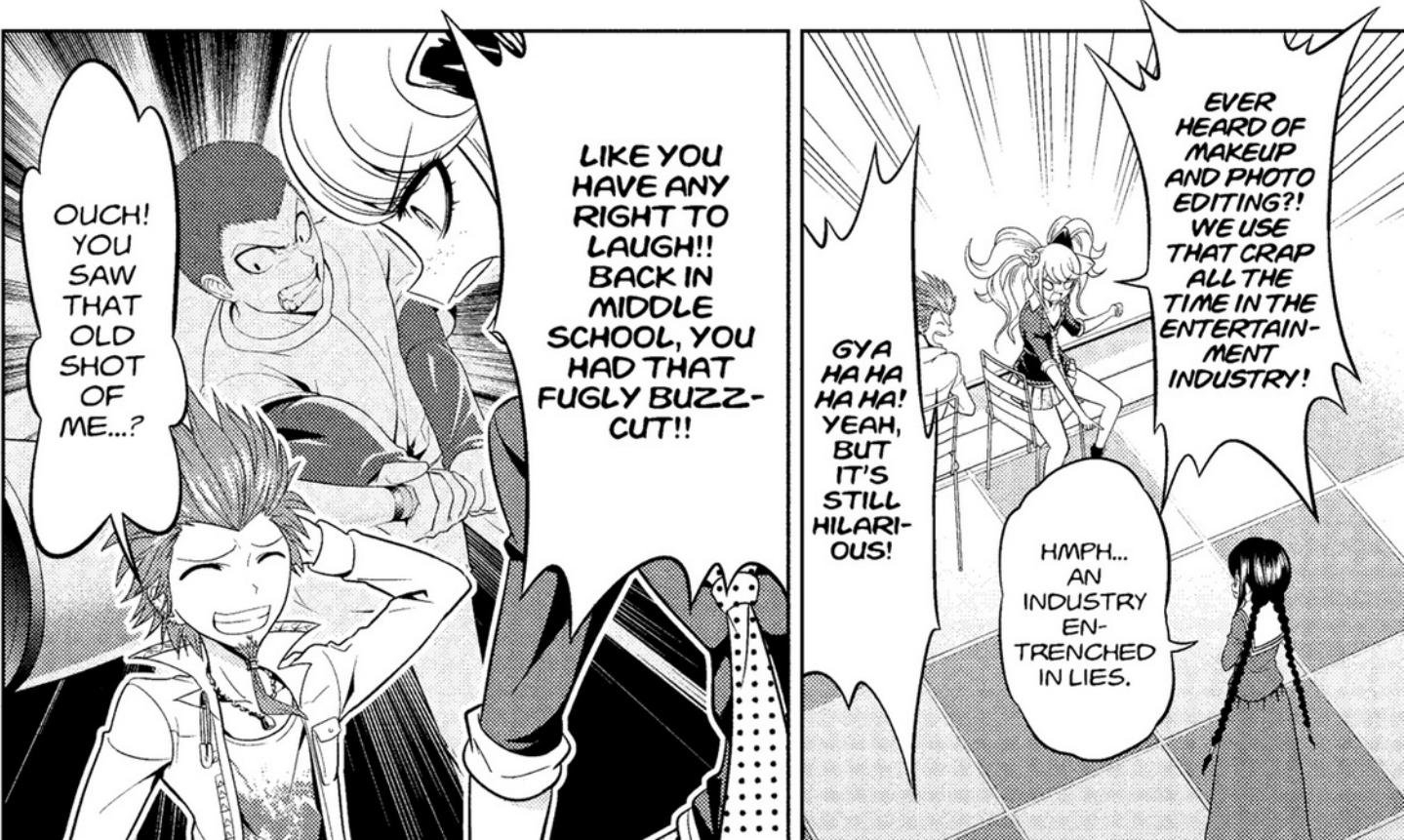
...AND
TOLD
THEM
THEY HAVE
TO KILL
EACH
OTHER IF
THEY EVER
WANT TO
LEAVE!

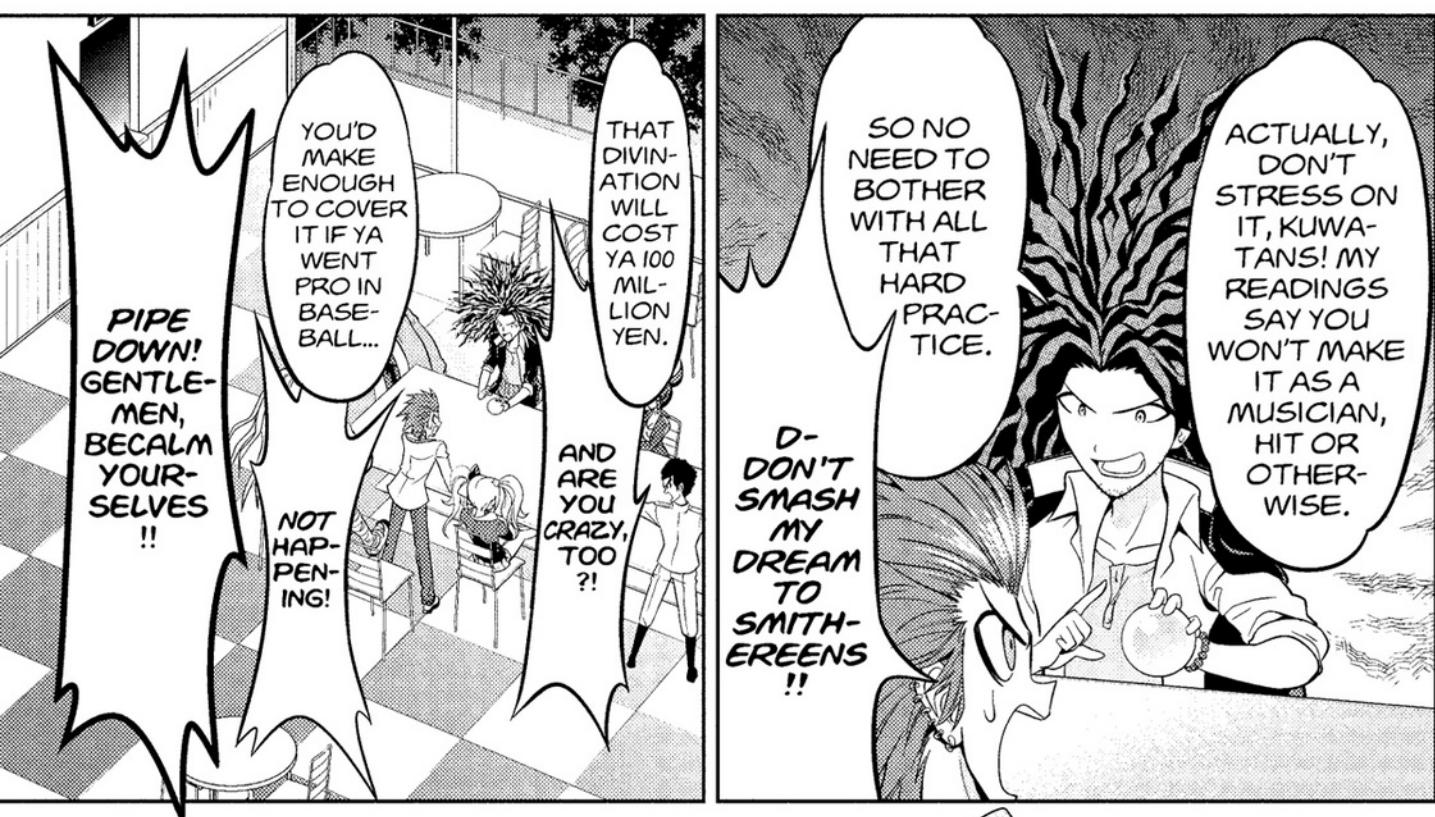
...ultimate
despair.



#02 [(AB)NORMAL ARC: KILL AND
LIVE TO SURVIVE (DAILY LIFE)]







校則

HIBOUGAMINE GAKUEN
電子生徒手帳



"ANYONE
GUILTY OF
KILLING A
FELLOW
CLASSMATE MAY
'GRADUATE',
BUT THEY MUST
NOT LET THE
OTHER
STUDENTS
FIND OUT
WHAT THEY
HAVE
DONE."

仲間の誰かを殺したクロは
“卒業”となります
自分がクロだと他の生徒に
知られてはいけません。

THIS
E-HANDBOOK WE
RECEIVED
FROM
MONO-
KUMA
SAYS...

A
RATHER
INTRIGUING
ASPECT OF
THE SCHOOL
REGULA-
TIONS HAS
CAUGHT MY
EYE.

SPEAK!

...MAY
I
POINT
SOM-
ETHING
OUT?



I
WILL
BE
GOING
NOW.

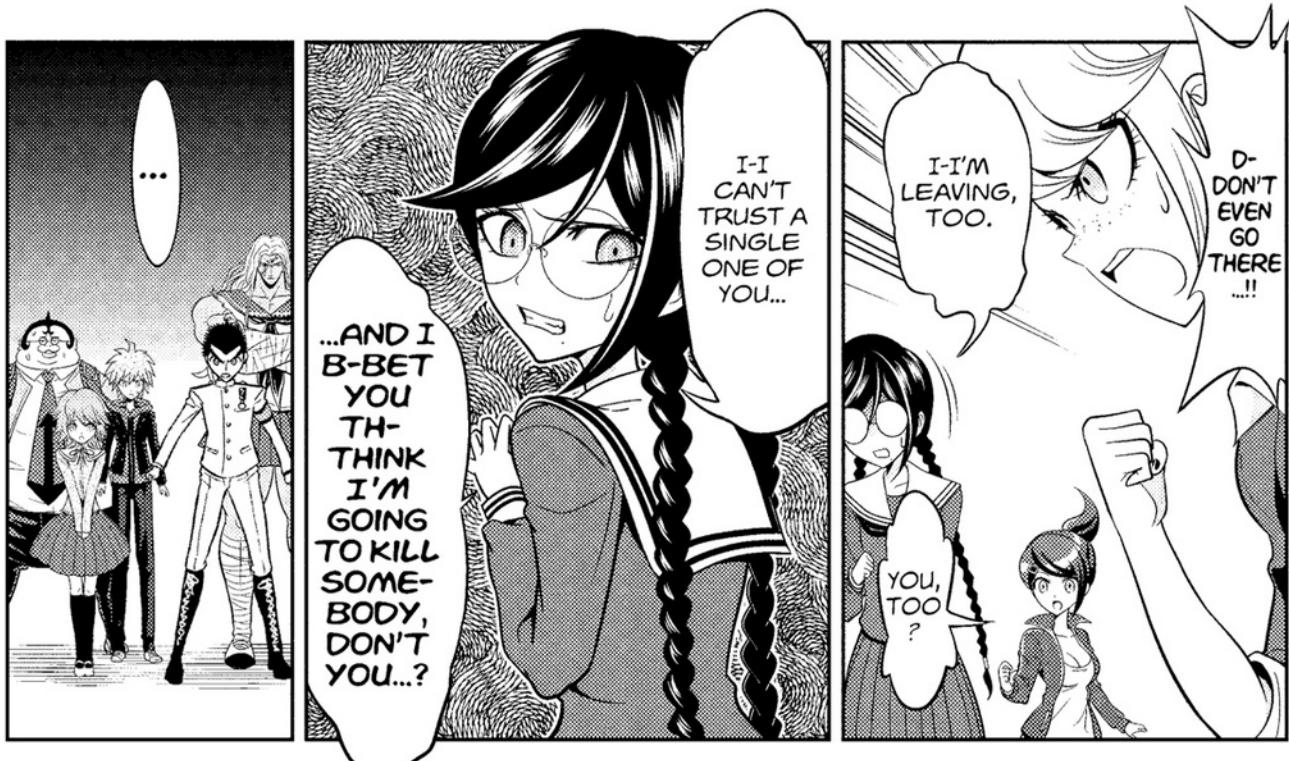
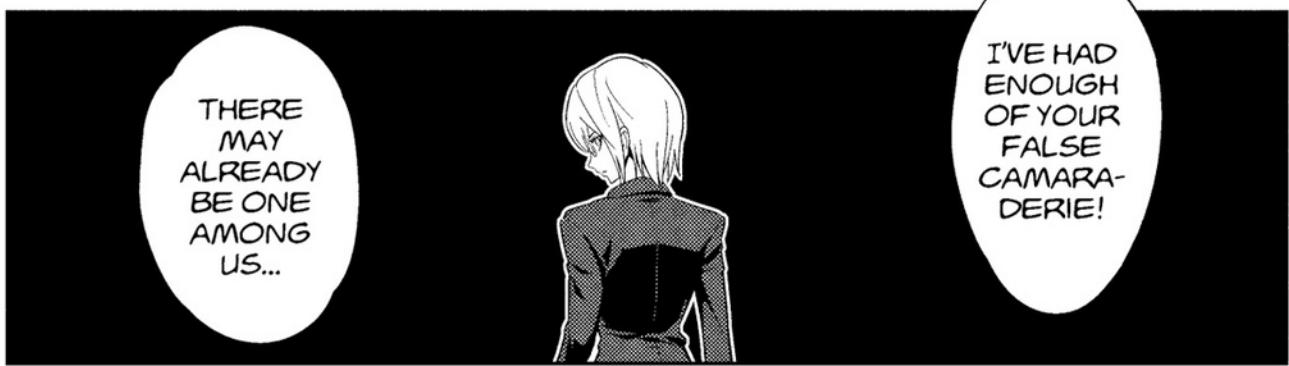
IT
MEANS EXACTLY
WHAT IT SAYS. IN
ESSENCE, THE
RULE STATES
THAT IF YOU'RE
GOING TO
COMMIT MURDER,
DO SO IN
SECRET.

NOW
WHAT
PRECISELY
DO YOU
MAKE OF
THAT?

...TOGA-
MI!

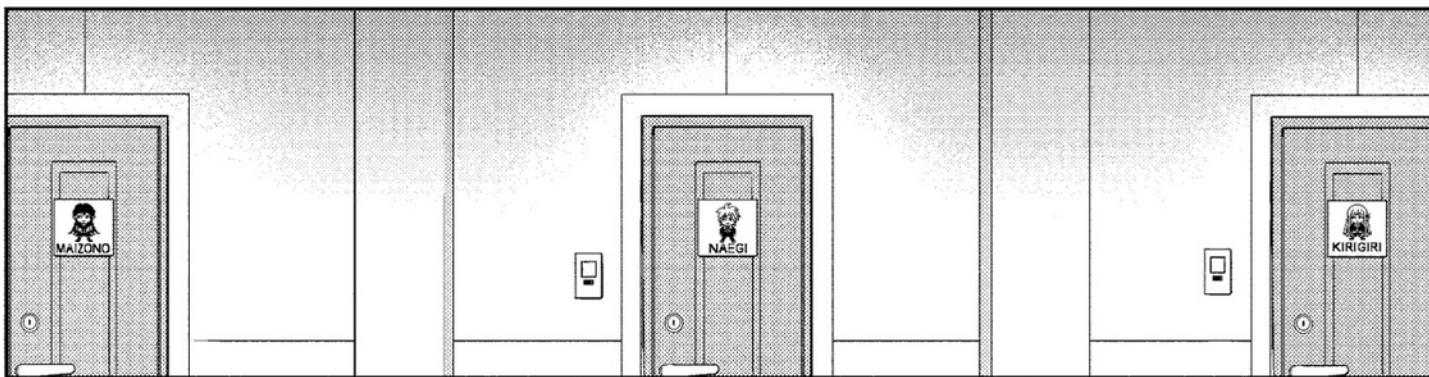
YOU
MEAN
"MUST NOT
LET THE
OTHER
STUDENTS
FIND OUT"...?
I'M KINDA
CURIOUS
MYSELF...





Whoever is behind all this even prepared a hotel area for us with private rooms...

In the end, we didn't get anywhere with the meeting before breaking up.



Everyone is drifting apart...



...Can we really manage to break out of here the way things stand...?







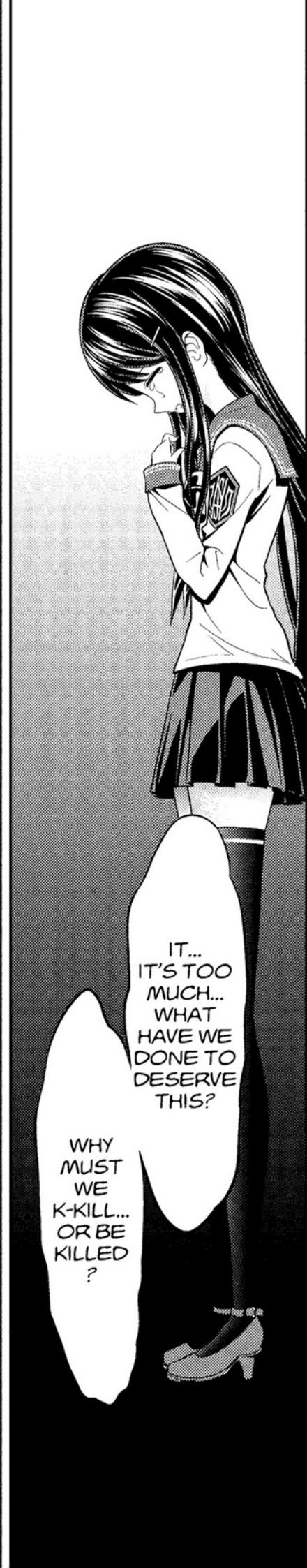
...they tried to kill Maizono...?!



PLEASE...
HELP
ME...

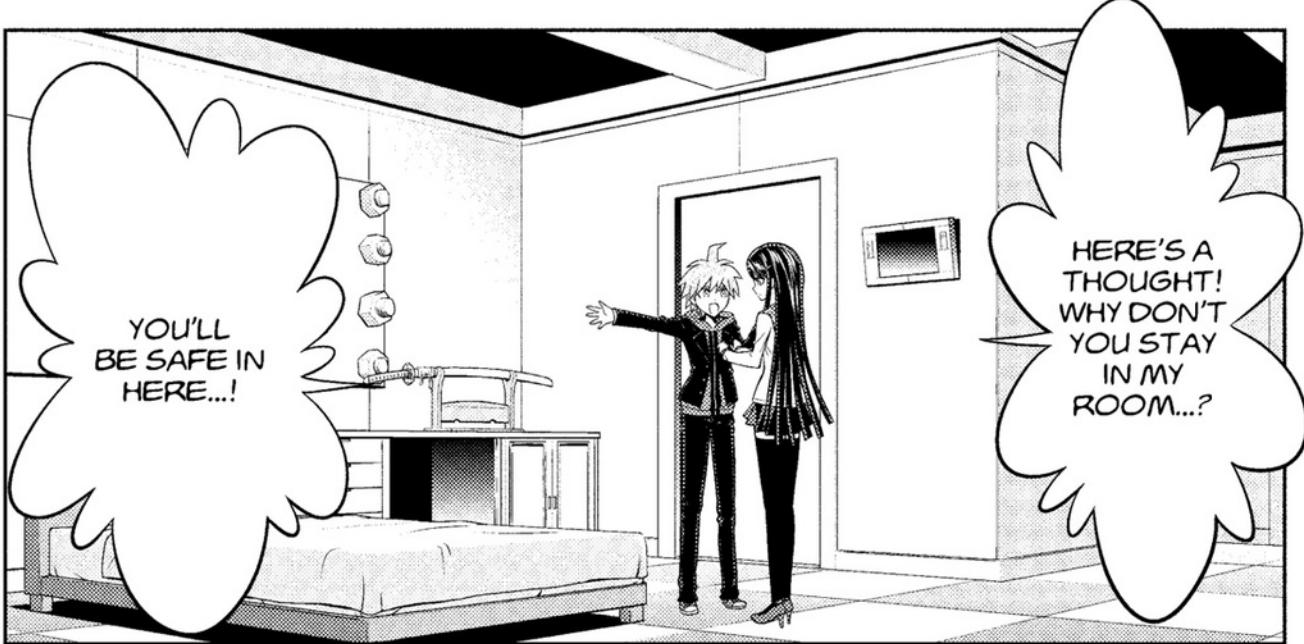


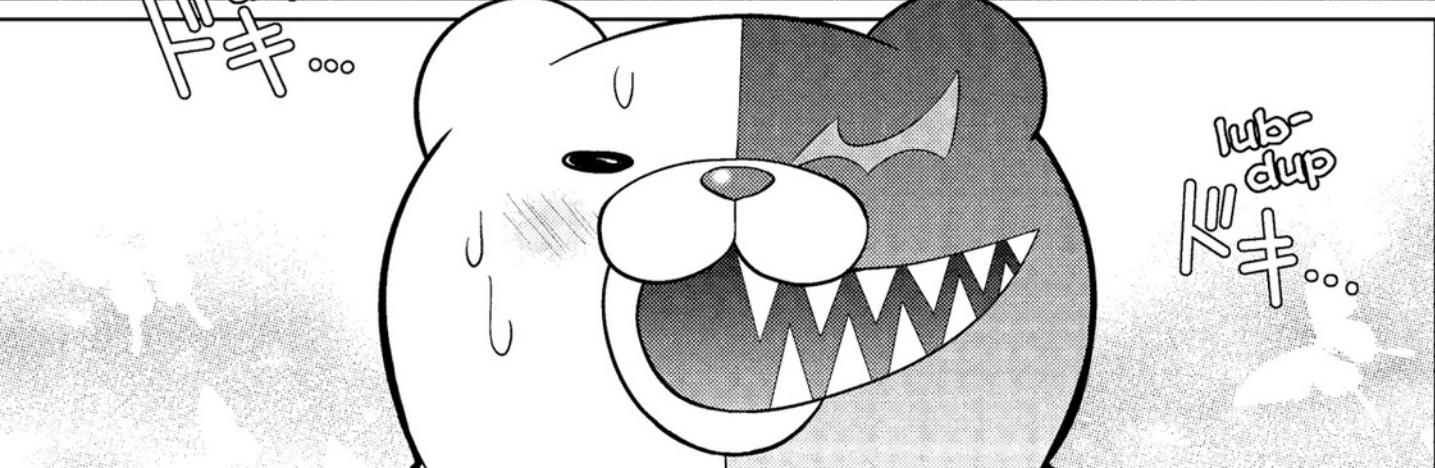
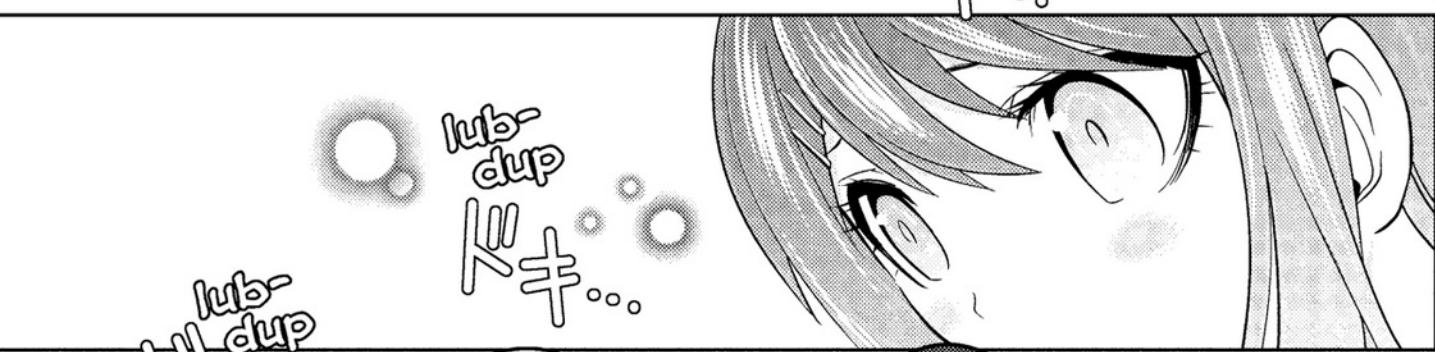
...I CAN'T
TAKE THIS
ANYMORE...!

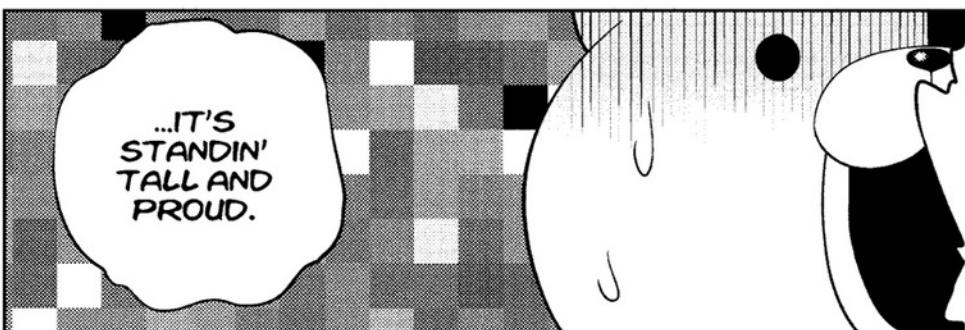


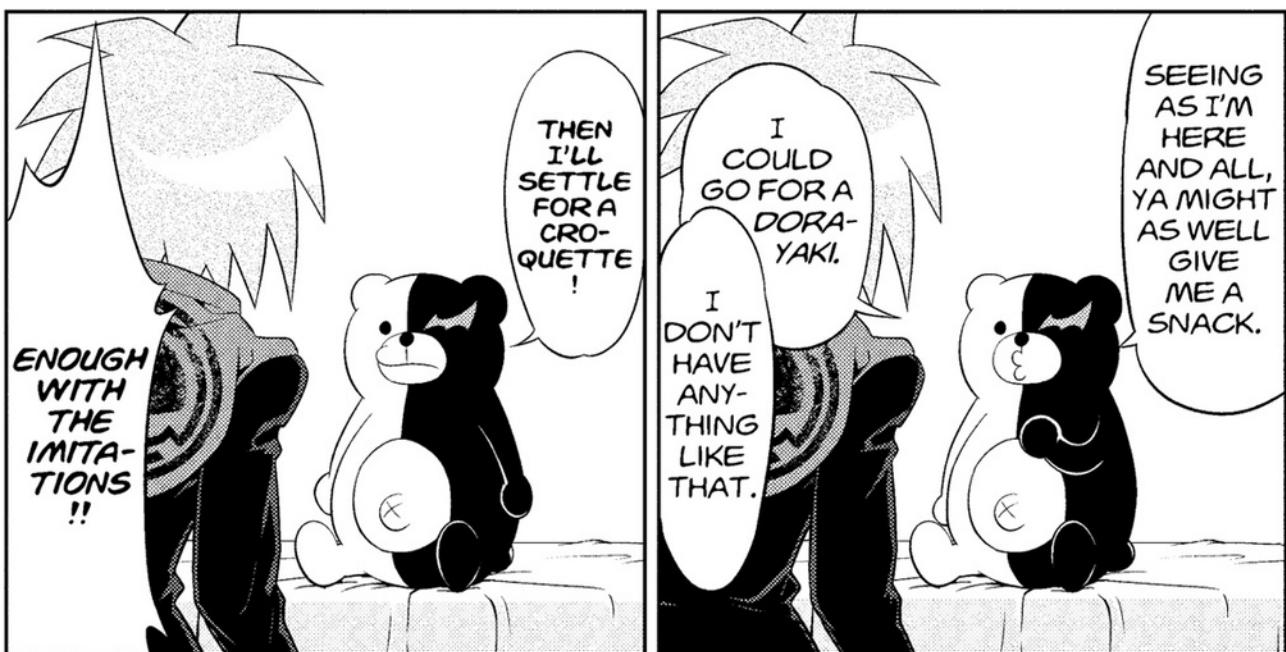


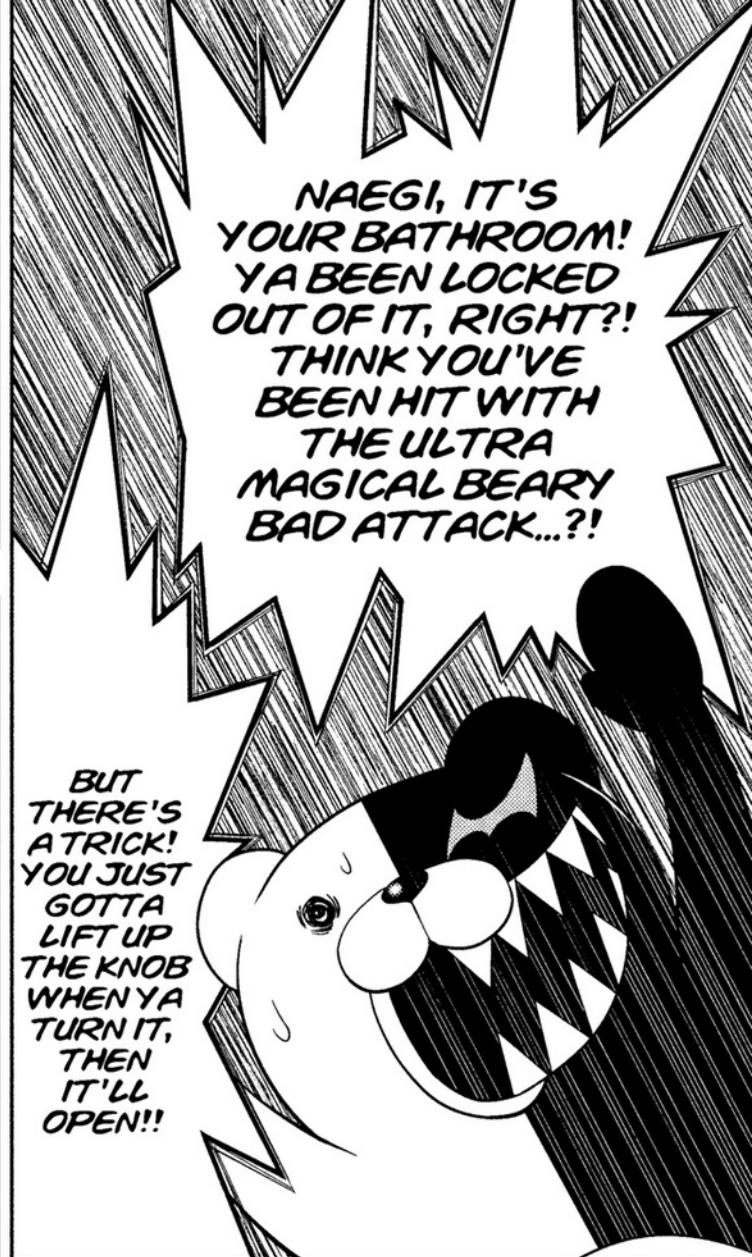




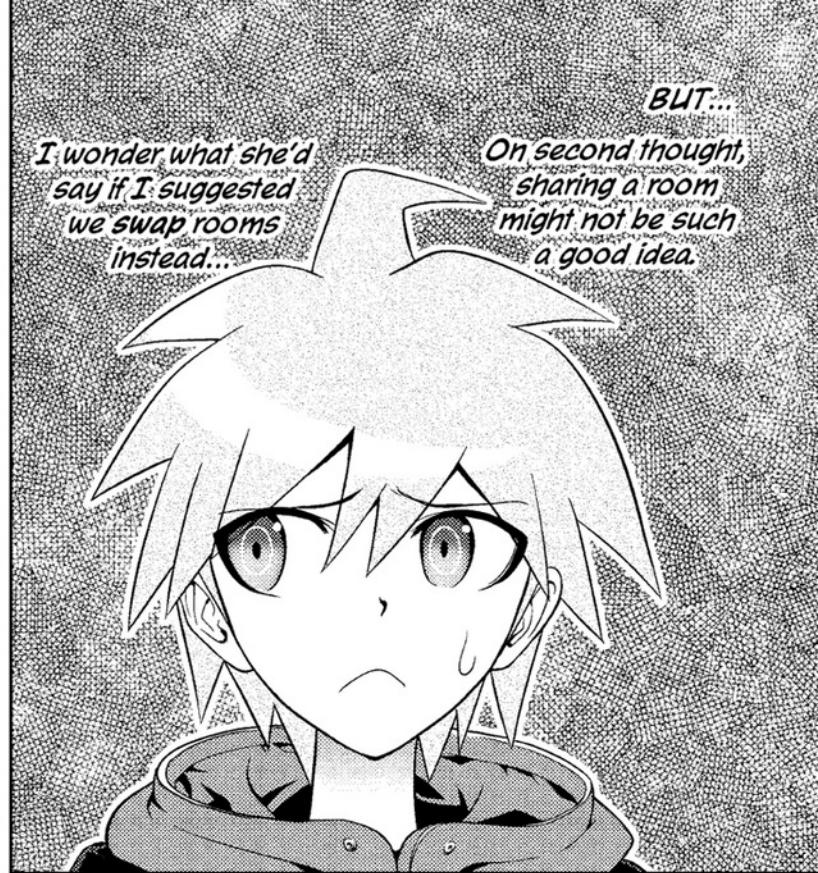






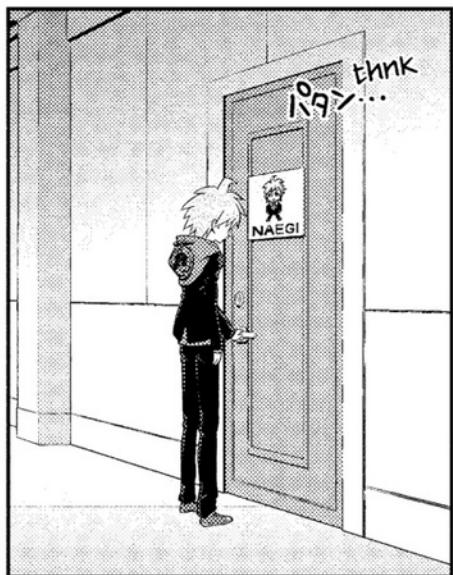






...that you feel
good enough to
joke again.

What a
relief.
Maizono,
I'm glad...

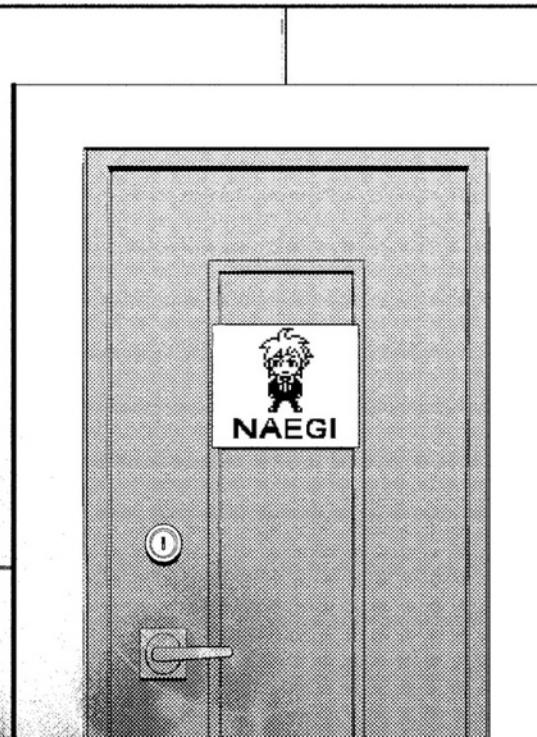


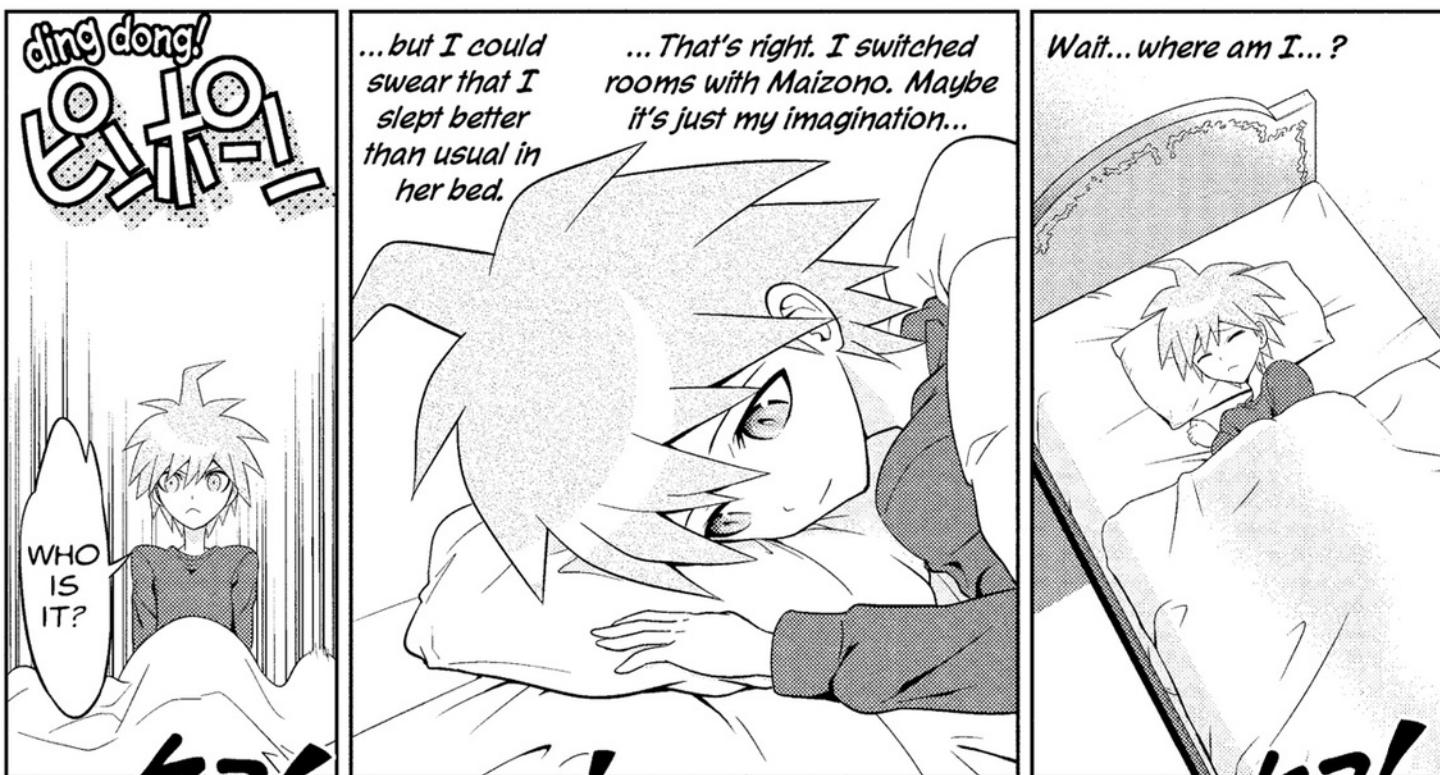
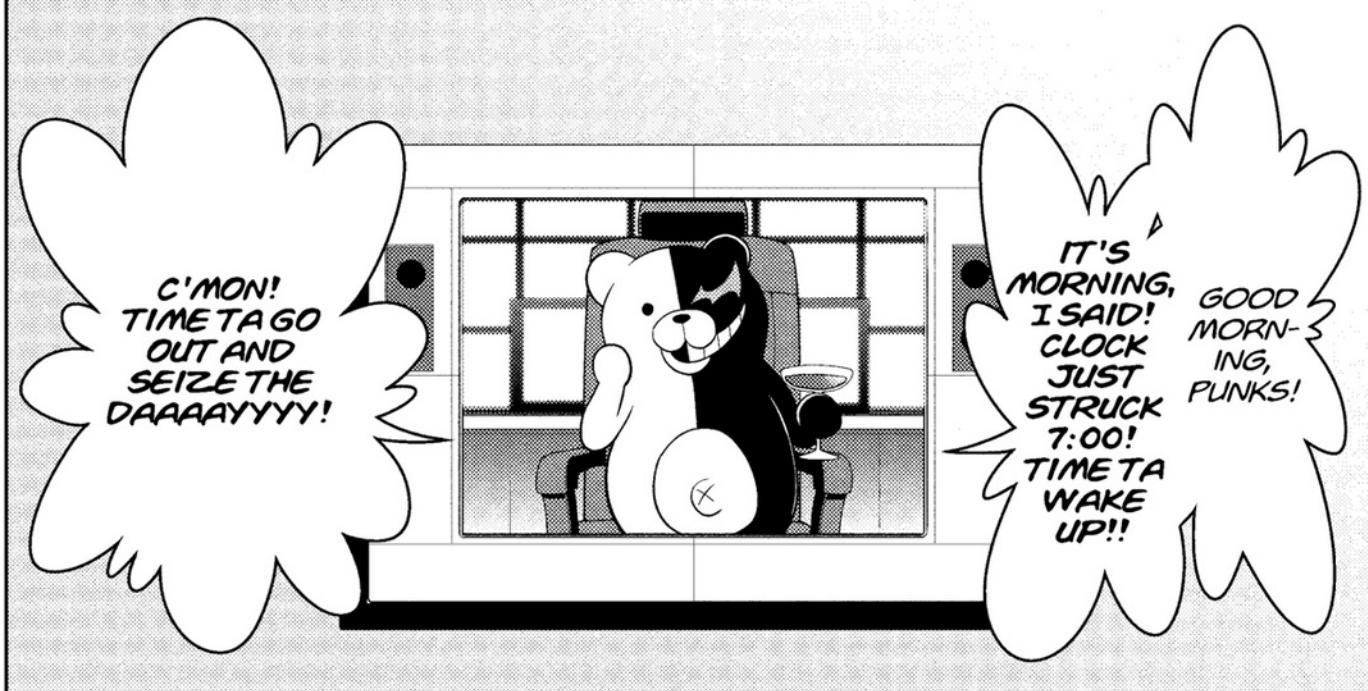
...I swear
that I will
get you
out of
here.

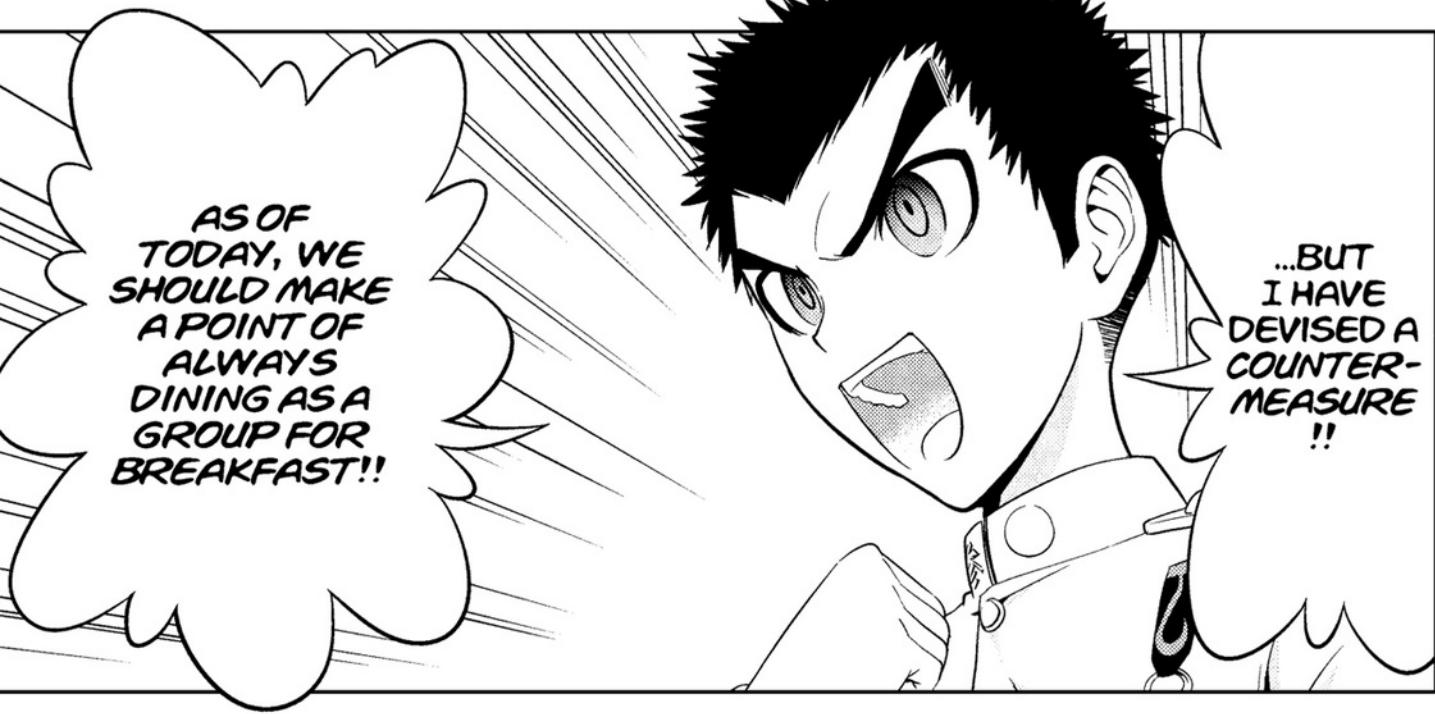
Maizono...

...you said
that you're my
assistant,
didn't you...?

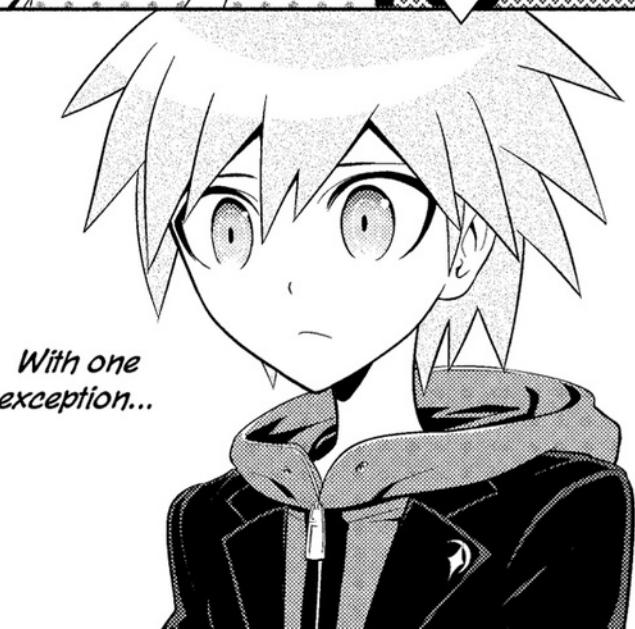
After all...









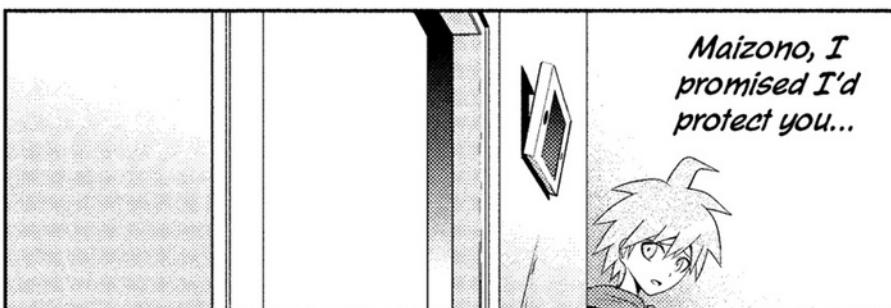




We even traded rooms... nothing could have happened to her!

She's fine! It's all in my mind... I'm letting my imagination get the best of me!







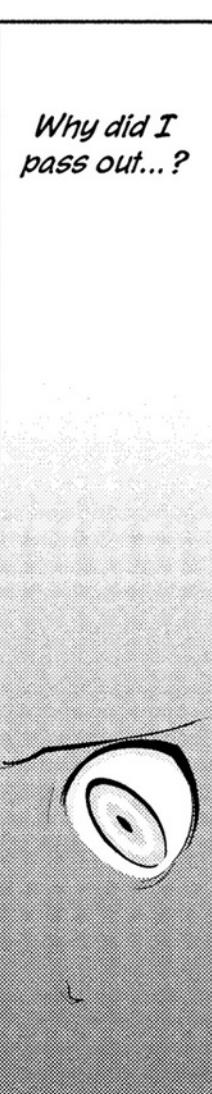
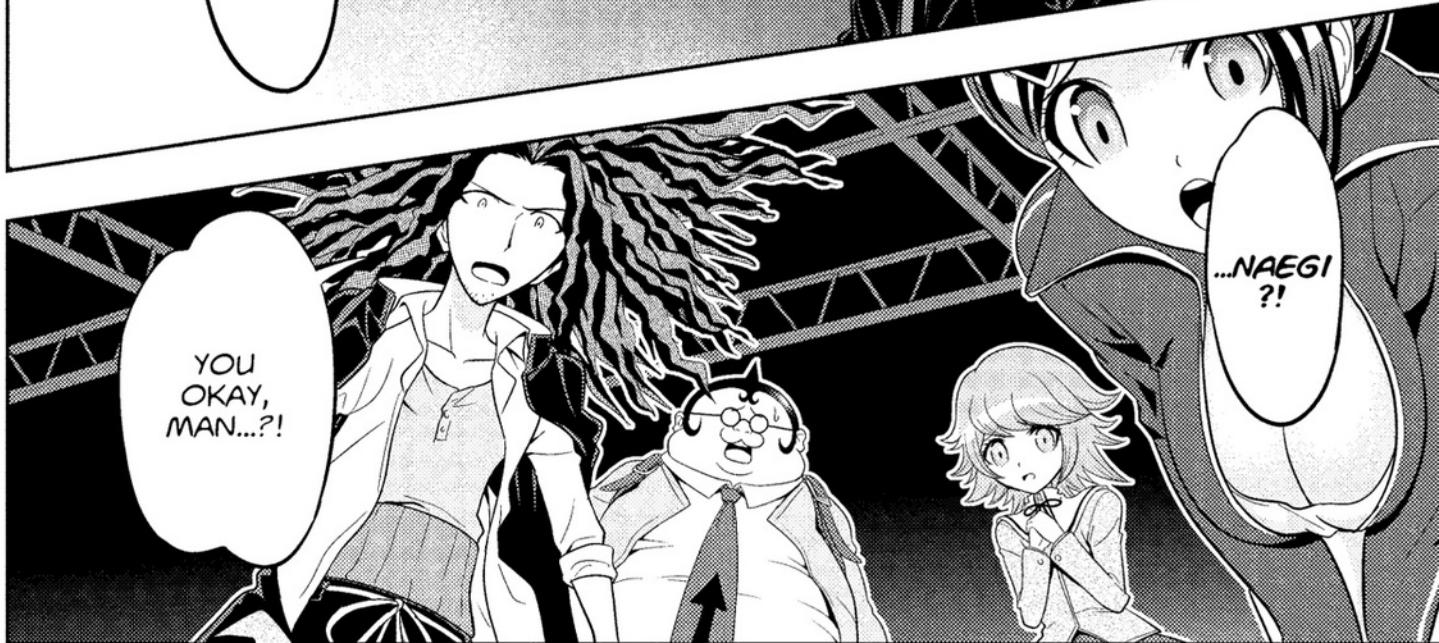


Maizono...
it's a joke...
isn't it?

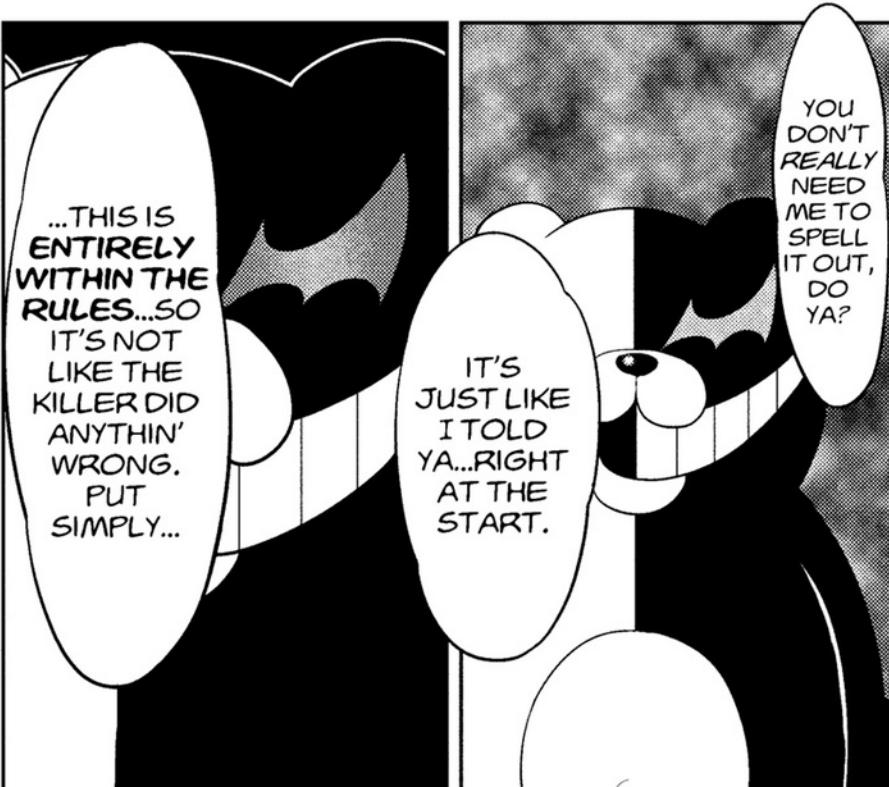
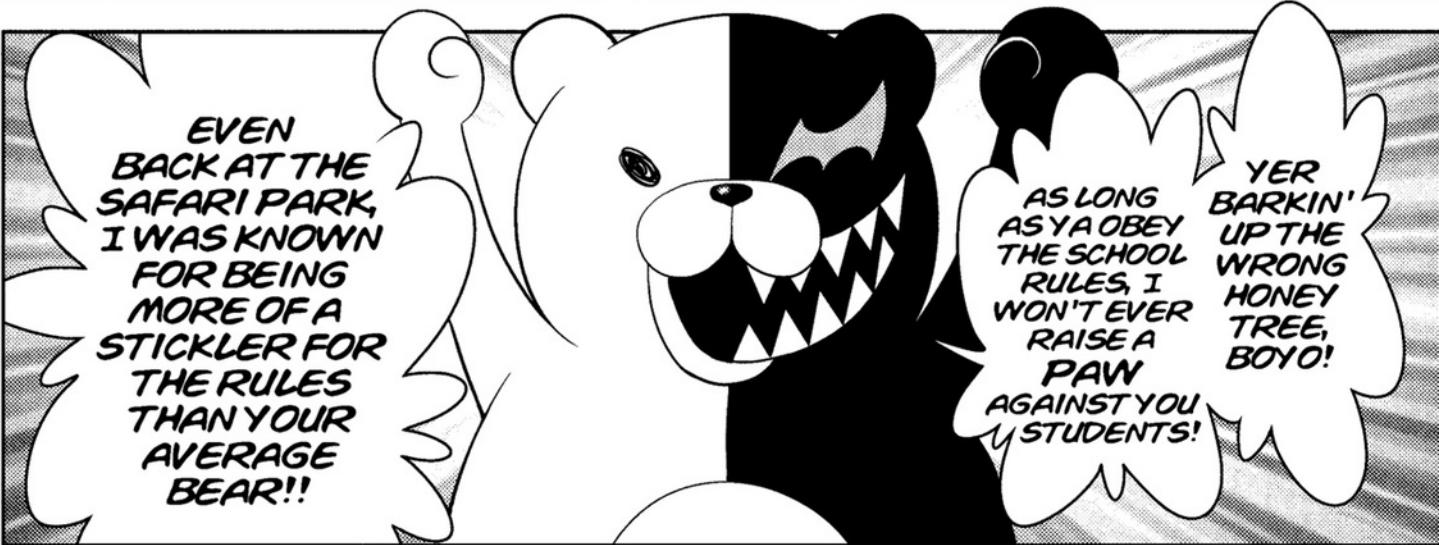
I'm just
kidding...
Naegi.

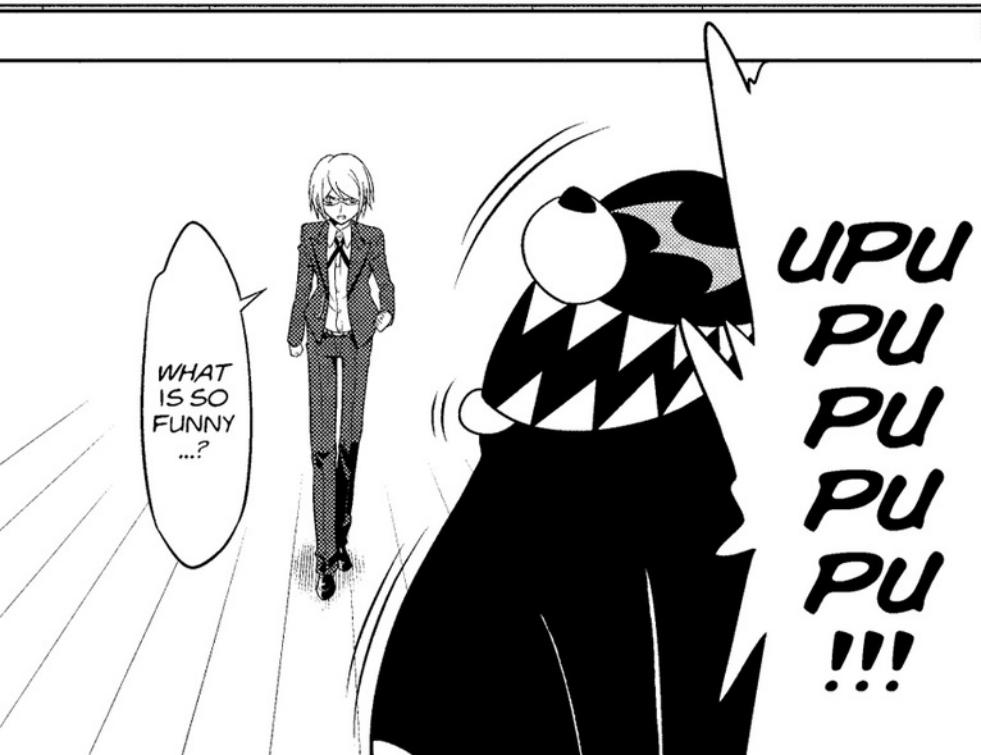
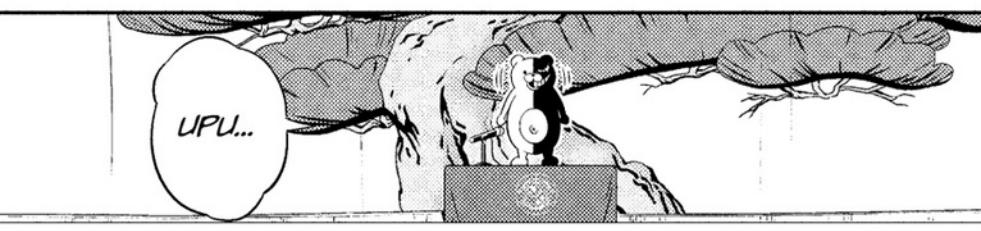
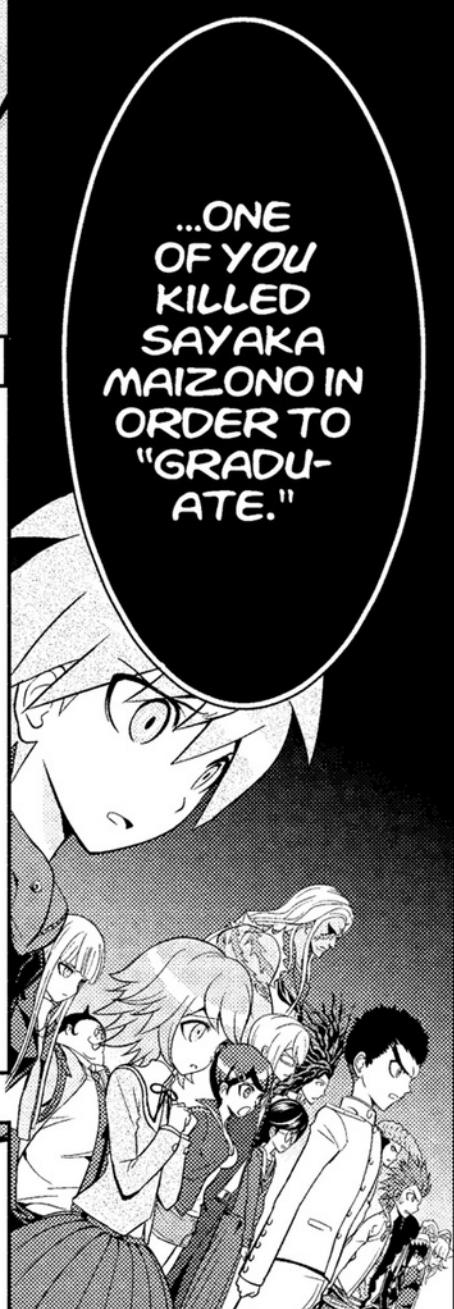
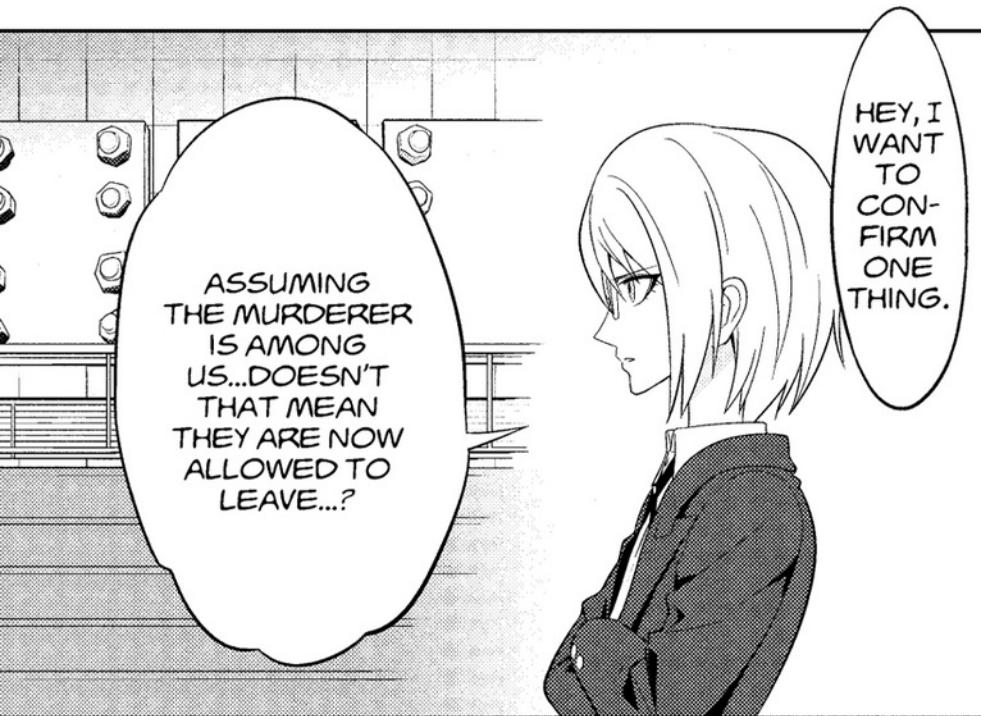
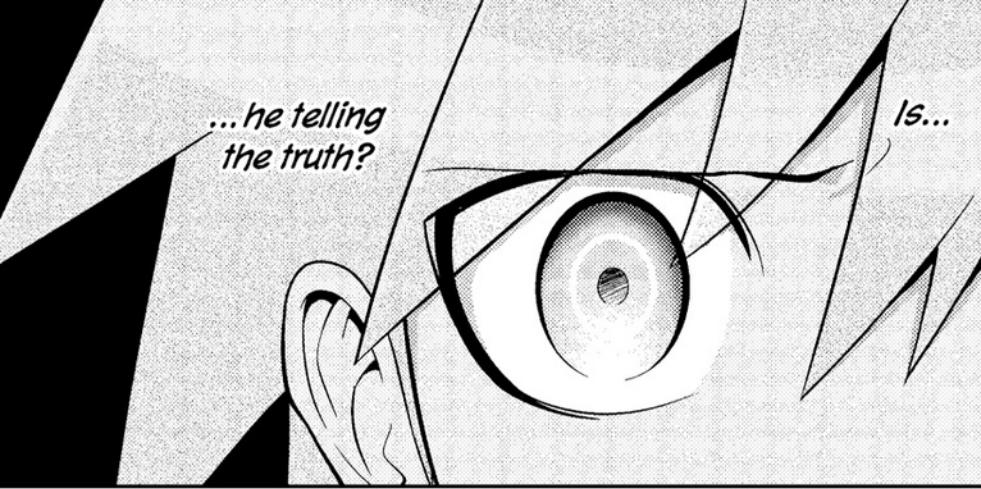


AAANEEEEE









...THE CLASS TRIAL !!!

YA
DIDN'T
FORGET
THE
PART
ABOUT
"MUST
NOT
LET
THE
OTHER
STUDENTS
FIND
OUT," DID
YA?

WELL,
THEN, WE
GOTTA
DETERMINE
WHETHER
THE
CULPRIT
MANAGED
TO CLEAR
THAT
LITTLE
REQUIRE-
MENT!!

YOU'RE
FUNNY!
AH, THE
NAIVETÉ
OF YOUTH!
JUST KILL
SOMEONE
AND WALTZ
RIGHT OUT,
EH...?

NO!
JUST...
NO! THE
SHOW'S
JUST
GETTING
STARTED
FOR YOU
ALL! FOR
THE NEXT
STAGE OF
THE GAME
IS...

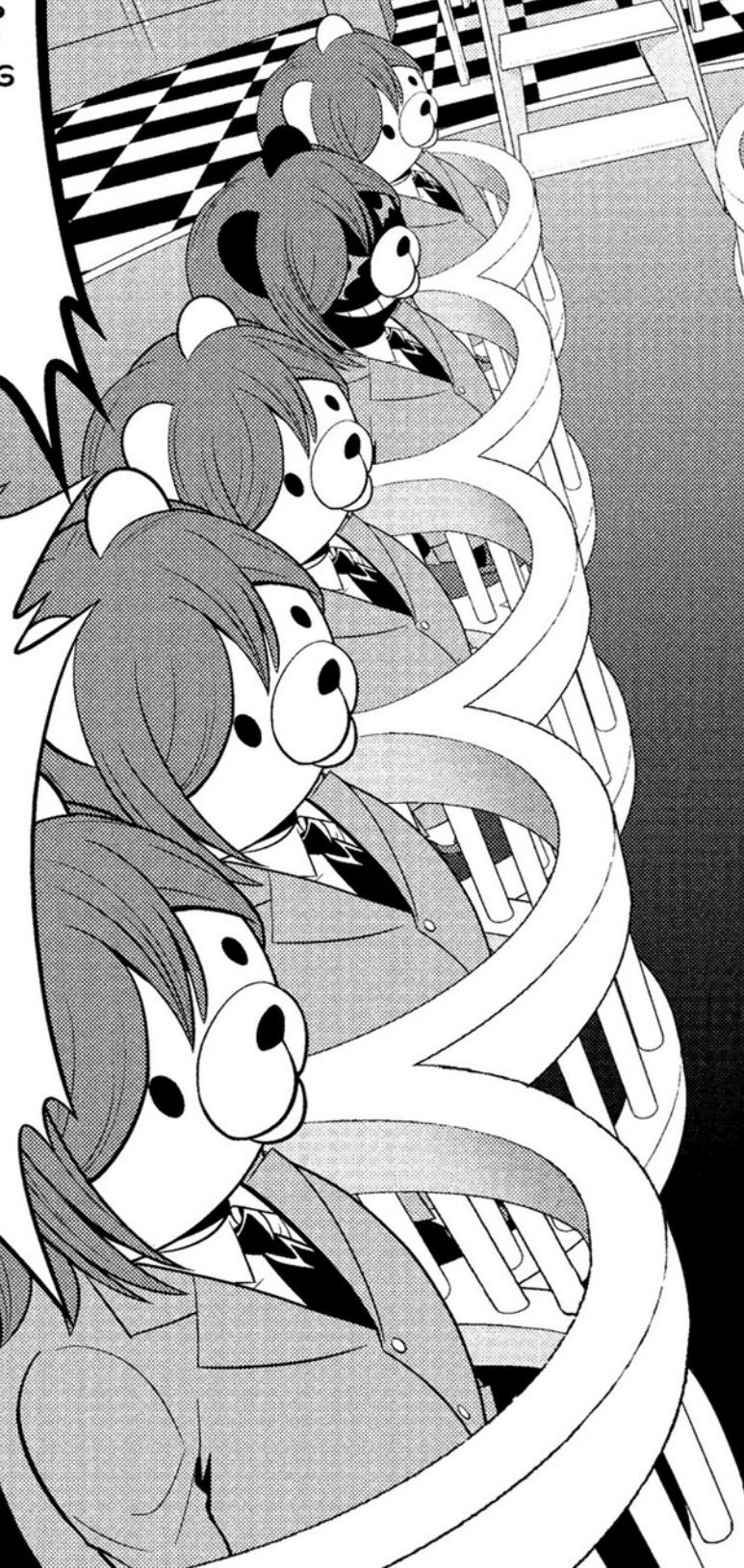
IF THE ARGUMENTS POSED IN THE CLASS TRIAL LEAD YA TO THE CORRECT ANSWER, I'LL ONLY "PUNISH" THE KILLER GUILTY OF DISTURBIN' THE ORDER!

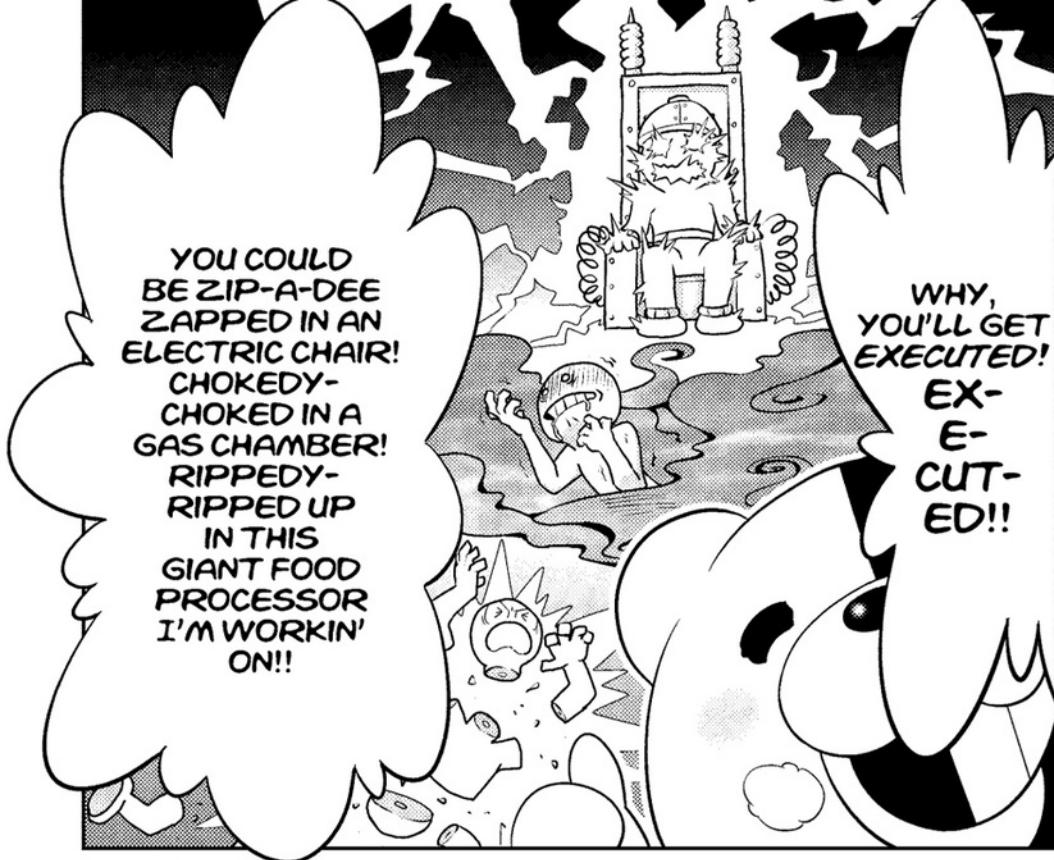
WHO IS THE GUILTY PERP HIDIN' AMONG YA?

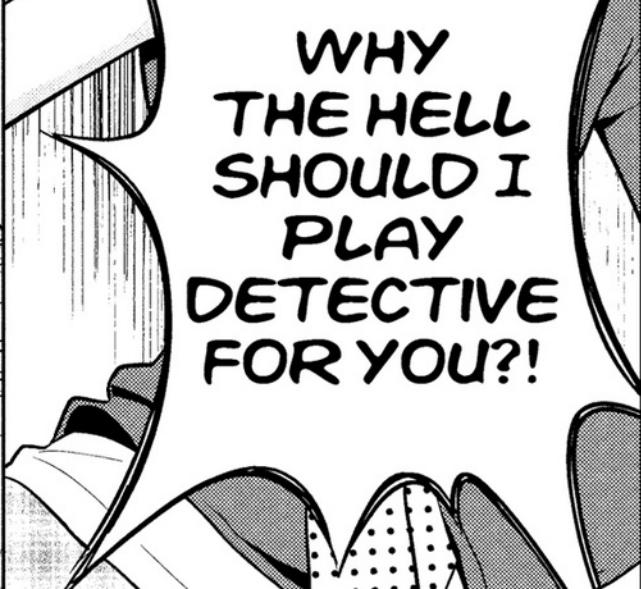
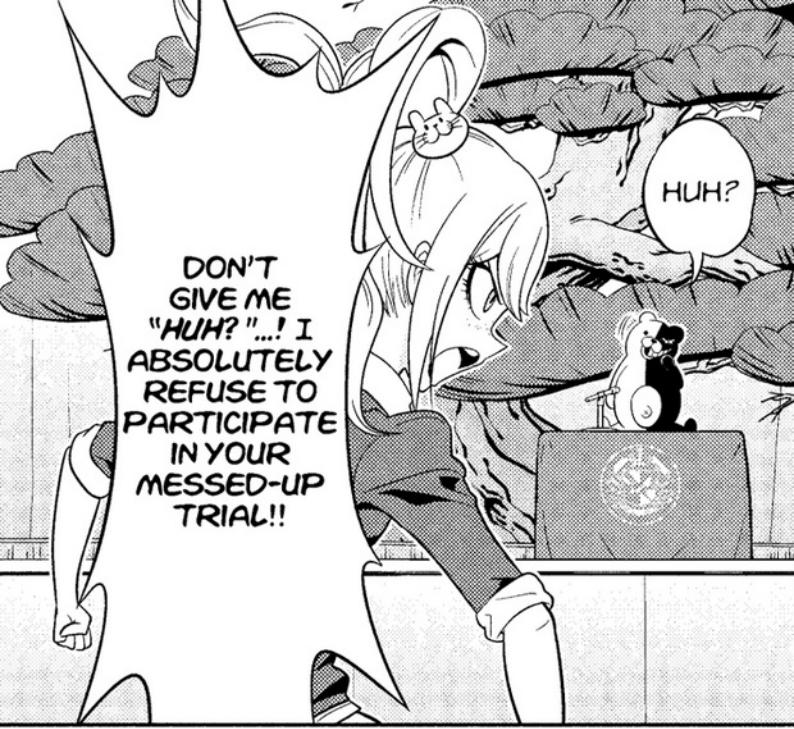
AN' THAT'S YOU. DECIDE WHO'S GUILTY.

THE JURY WILL NOW ASSEMBLE.

HOWEVER... IF YA GUESS WRONG, ONLY THE STUDENT WHO GOT AWAY WITH THE MURDER WILL SURVIVE! ALL OF THE INNOCENT STUDENTS WILL GET "PUNISHED" INSTEAD!!!







B-
BUT AS
YOUR
HEAD-
MASTER...
I'M NOT
ABOUT TA
YIELD TO
EVIL.
IT'S THE
MONO-
KUMA
WAY TO
FIGHT
TA THE
BITTER
END...

gulp

O-
OKAY...
I ADMIT
IT...I'M A
LITTLE
SCARED
OF YA.

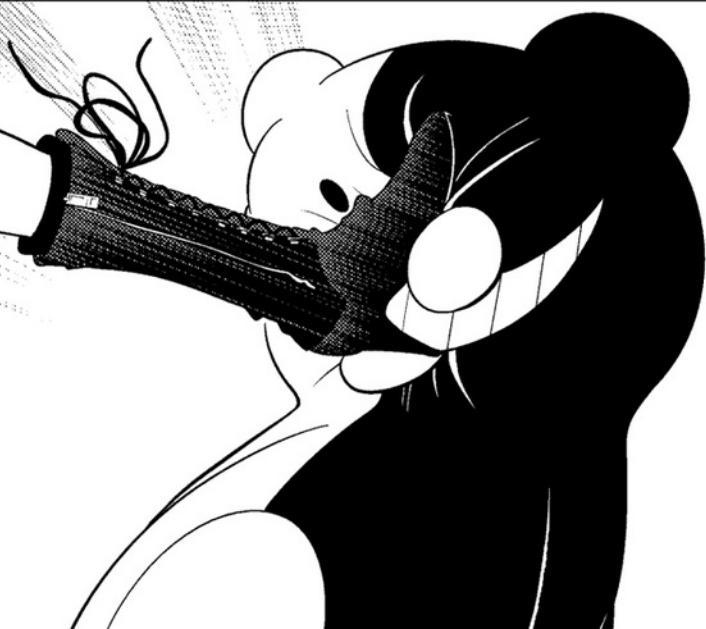
gleam!

I
DIDN'T
SAY YA
WERE
DIS-
MISSED

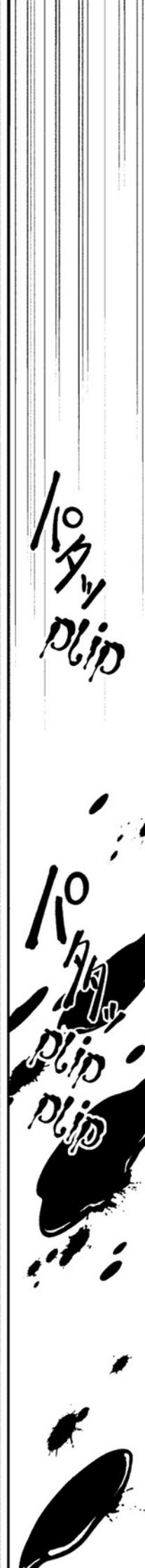
OUT
OF MY
WAY!!

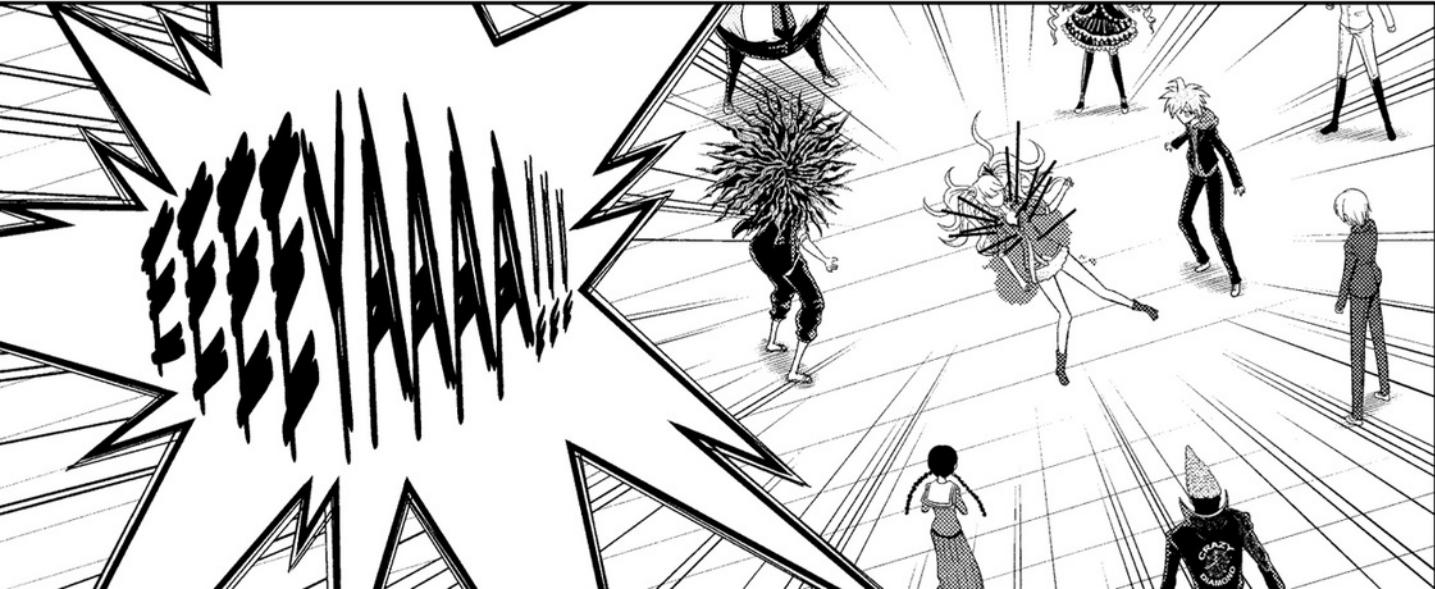
...YOU'RE
GONNA
HAVE TA
DEFEAT ME
FIRST...

...SO IF
YOU'RE
DETER-
MINED
TAGET
PAST...









I HAD
WANTED TO
AVOID AS MANY
UNNECESSARY
DEATHS AS
POSSIBLE...

I...
REALIZE ALL
TOO WELL NOW
THAT AN "OATH"
CAN HOLD
IMMENSE
POWER.

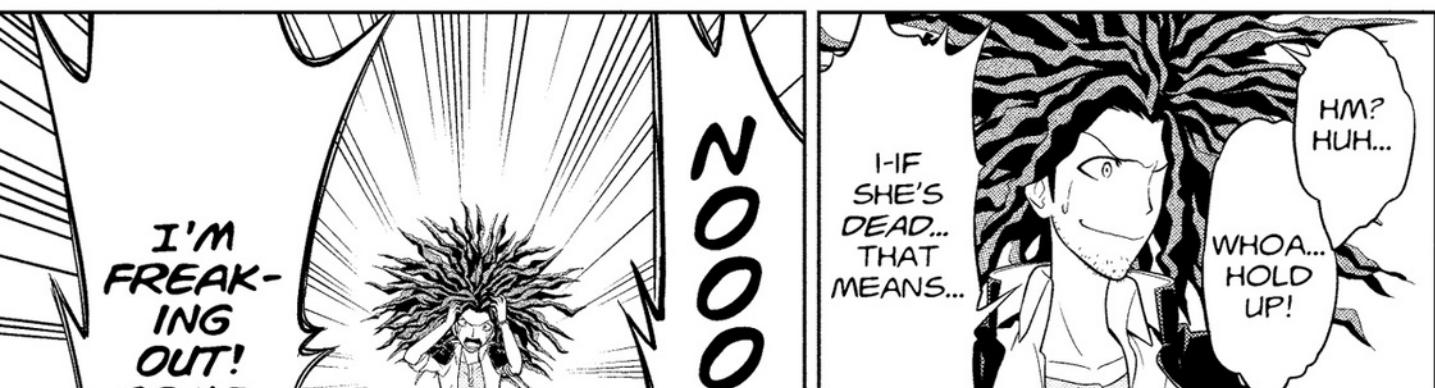
OH, THIS
IS A TRULY
POWERFUL
OATH!!

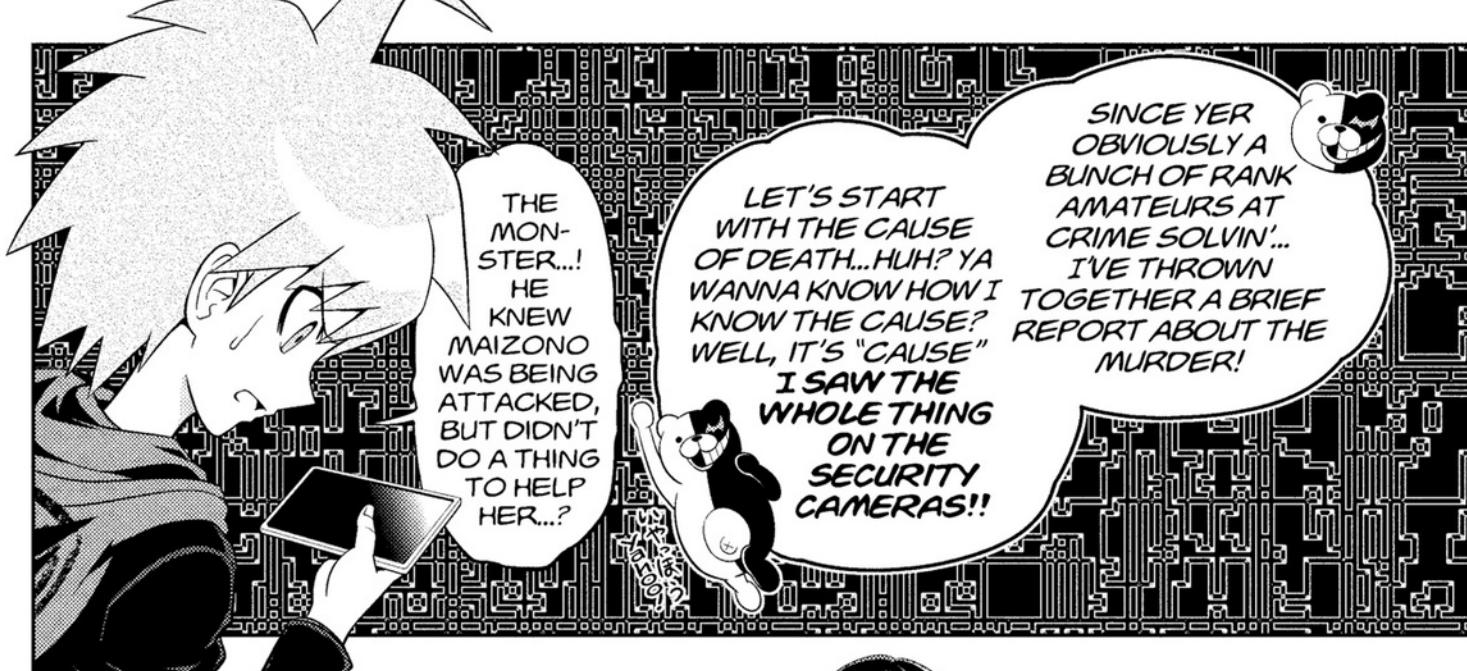
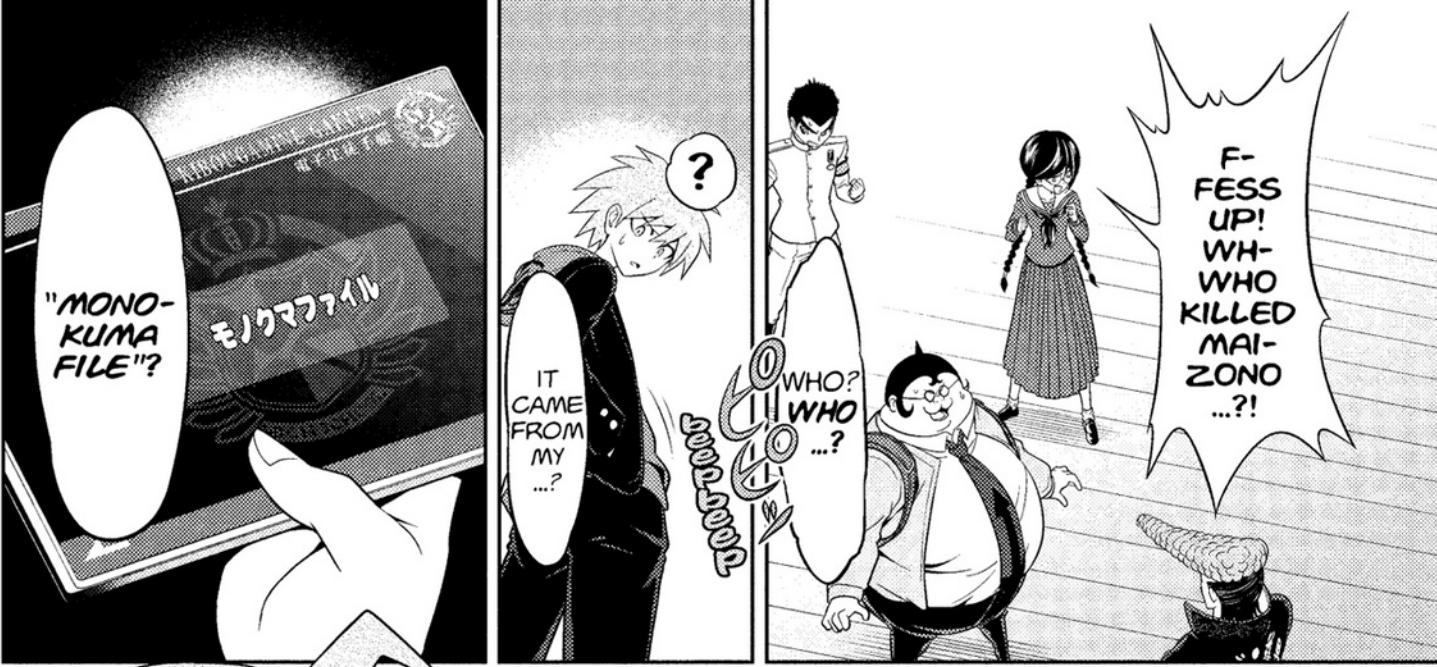
...BUT
IT LOOKS
LIKE I
NEEDED TO
MAKE AN
EXAMPLE
OF
SOMEONE
AFTER
ALL!

IF YA
DON'T WANNA
END UP LIKE
HER...BETTER
STICK TO
THE SCHOOL
REGULATIONS
LIKE GLUE!!!

NAH...
SHE'S
WHAT'S
GOIN'
DOWN!

NOW DO YA
SEE
WHAT'S
UP?
WELL,
NOT
ENO-
SHIMA
ANY-
MORE
...



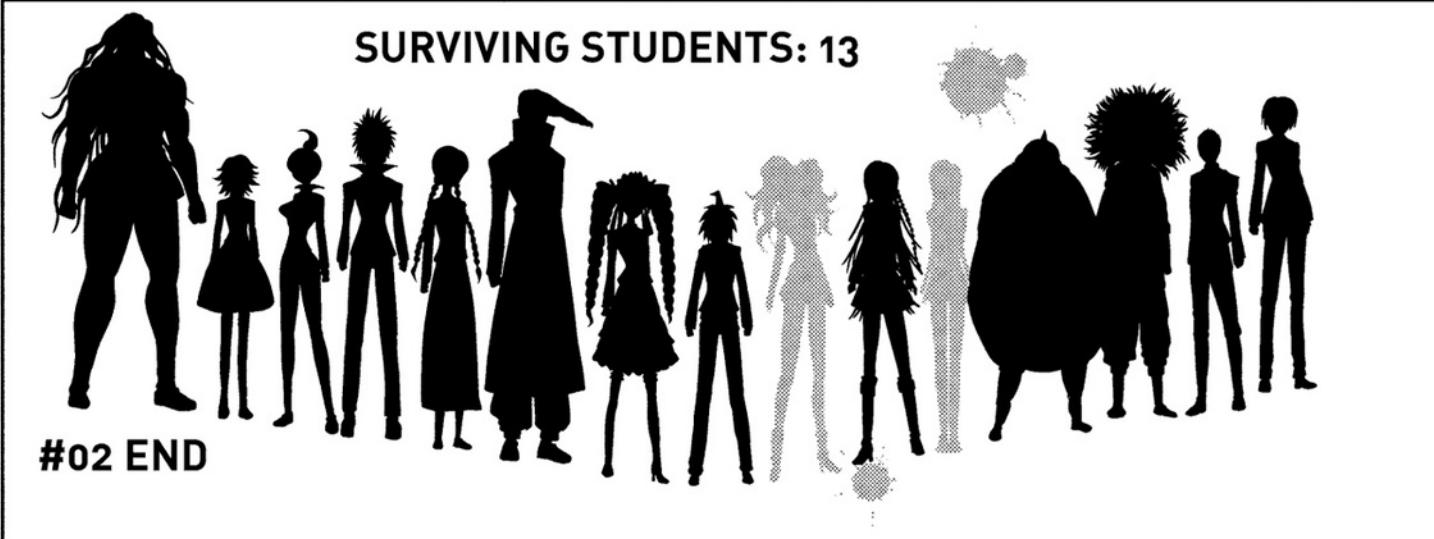
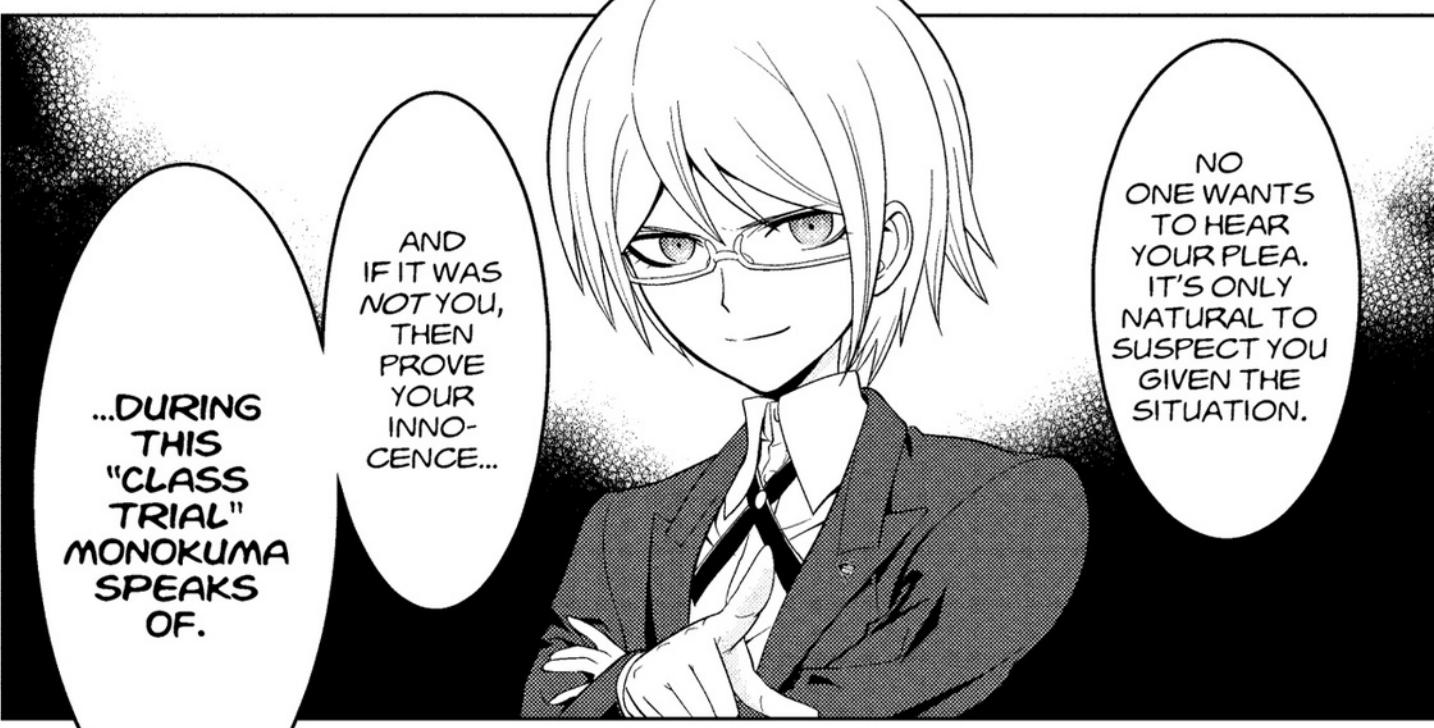


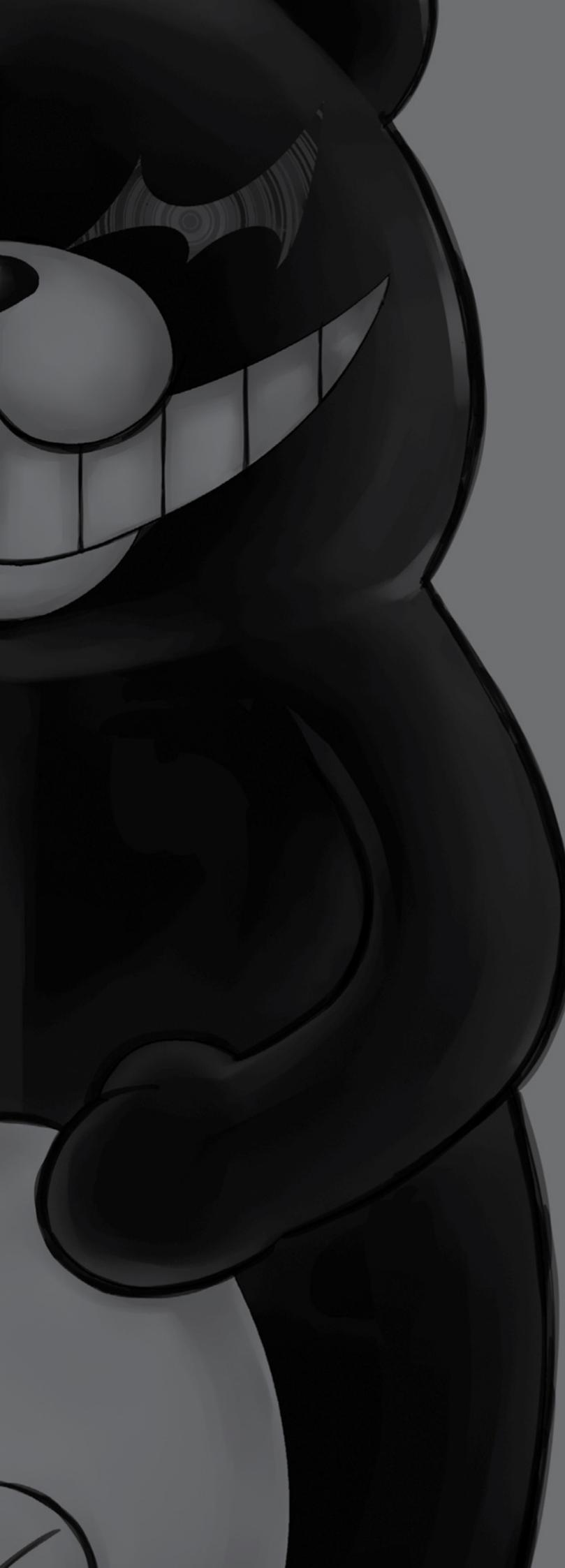
**INJURY (FATAL):
STAB WOUND TO
STOMACH**

**INJURY (NON-FATAL):
WELT ON RIGHT WRIST
EVIDENCE OF
FRACTURE**









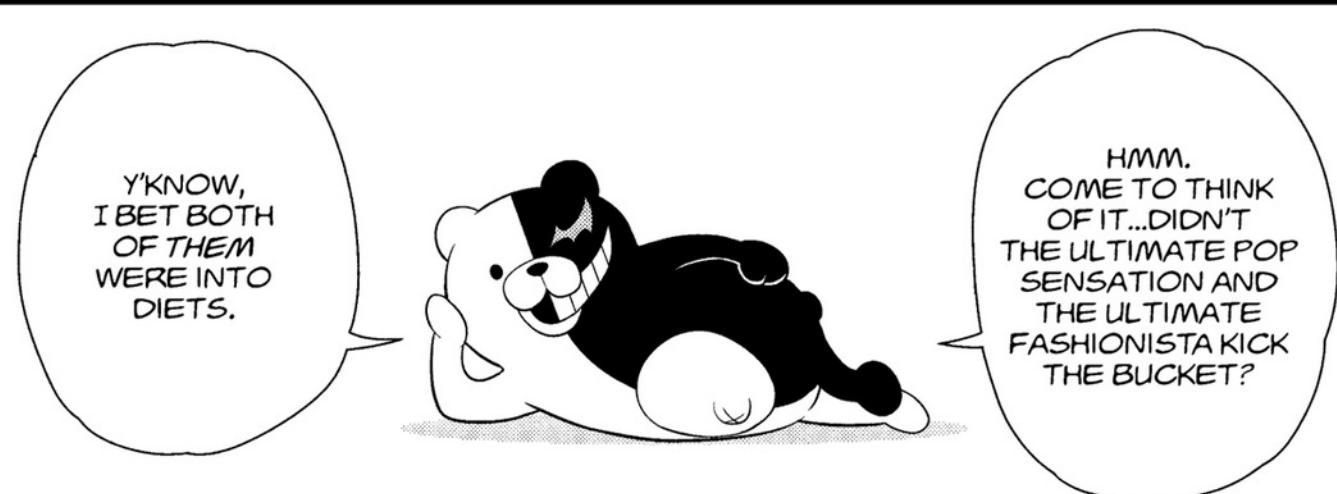
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DANGANRONPA
希望の学園と绝望の高校生
THE ANIMATION



DANGANRONPA

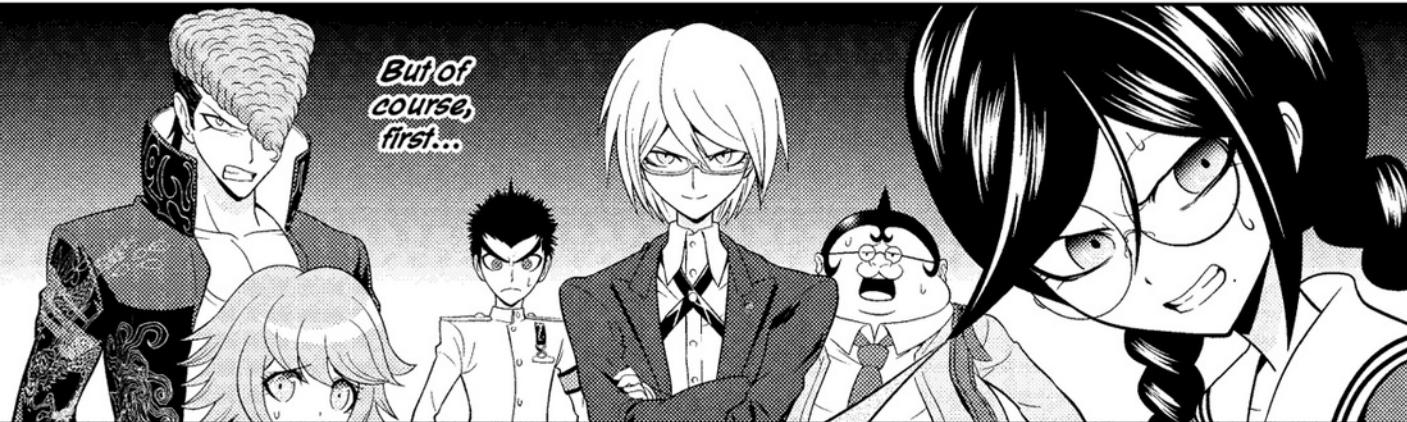
A SCHOOL OF HOPE . . . WITH STUDENTS OF DESPAIR!

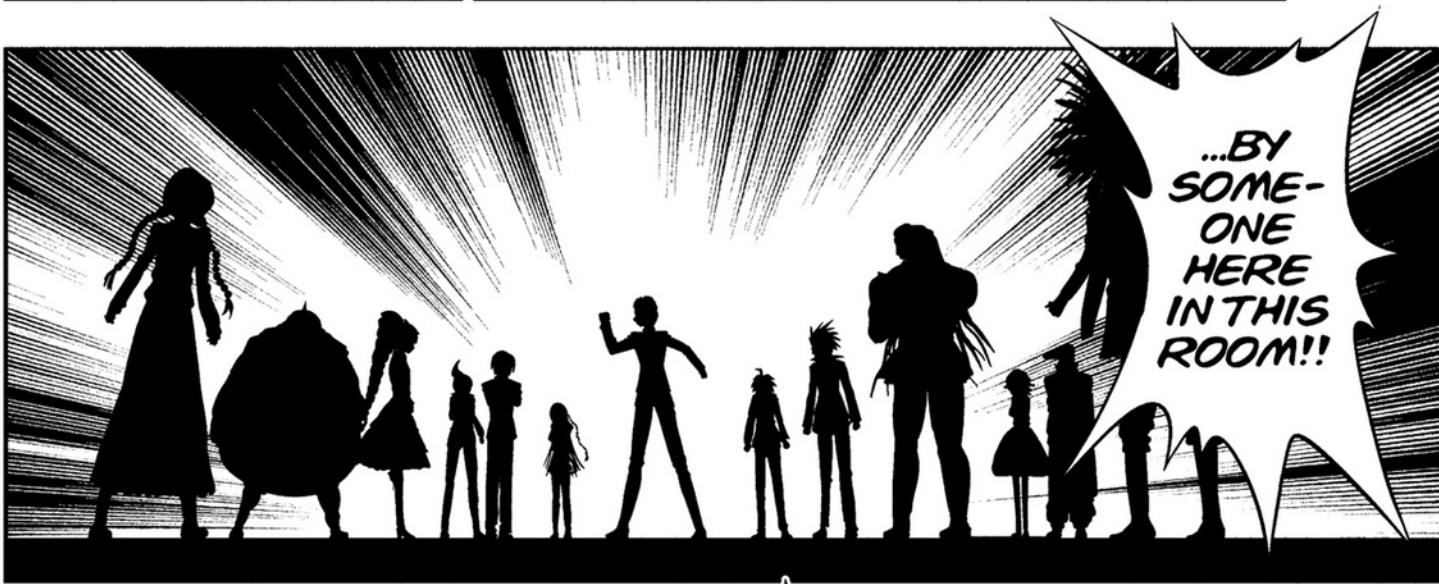
THE ANIMATION

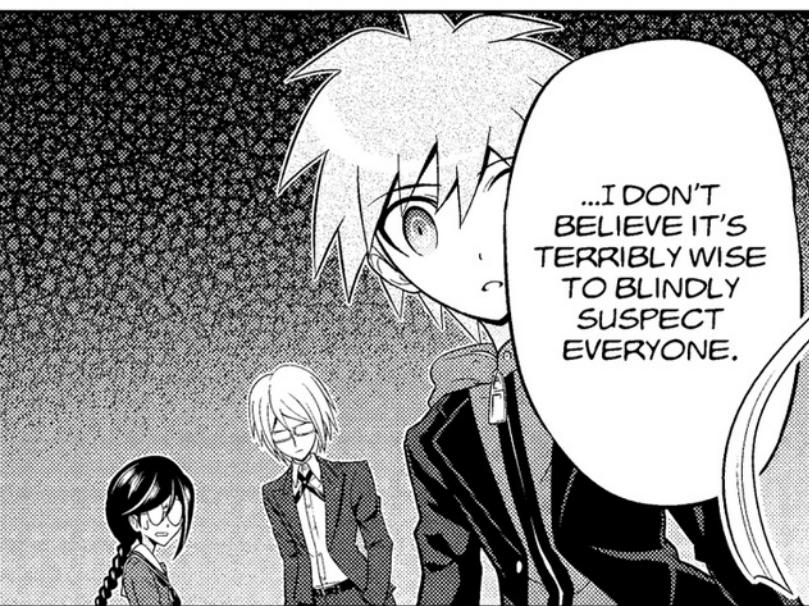
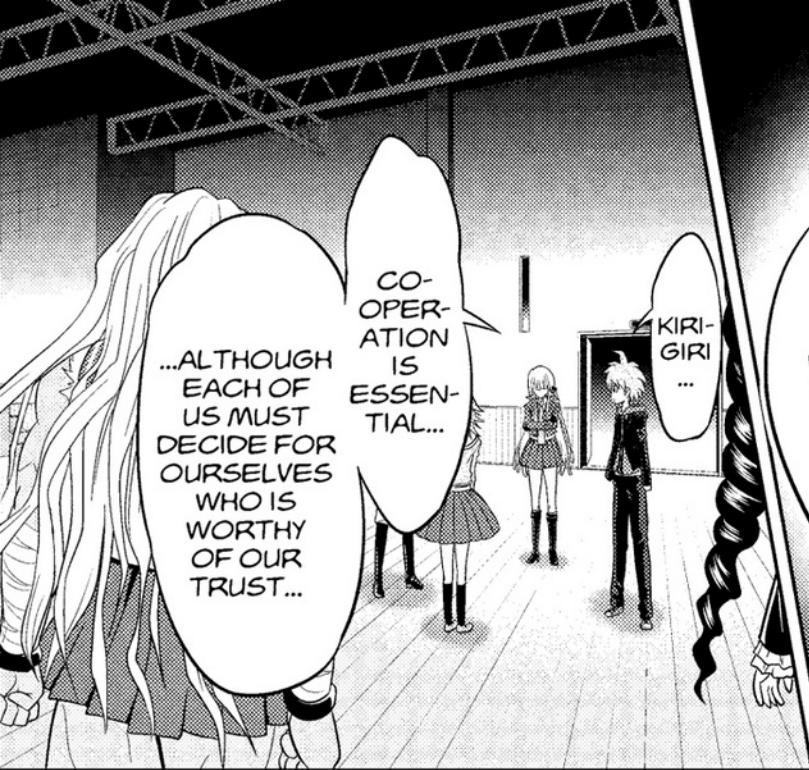


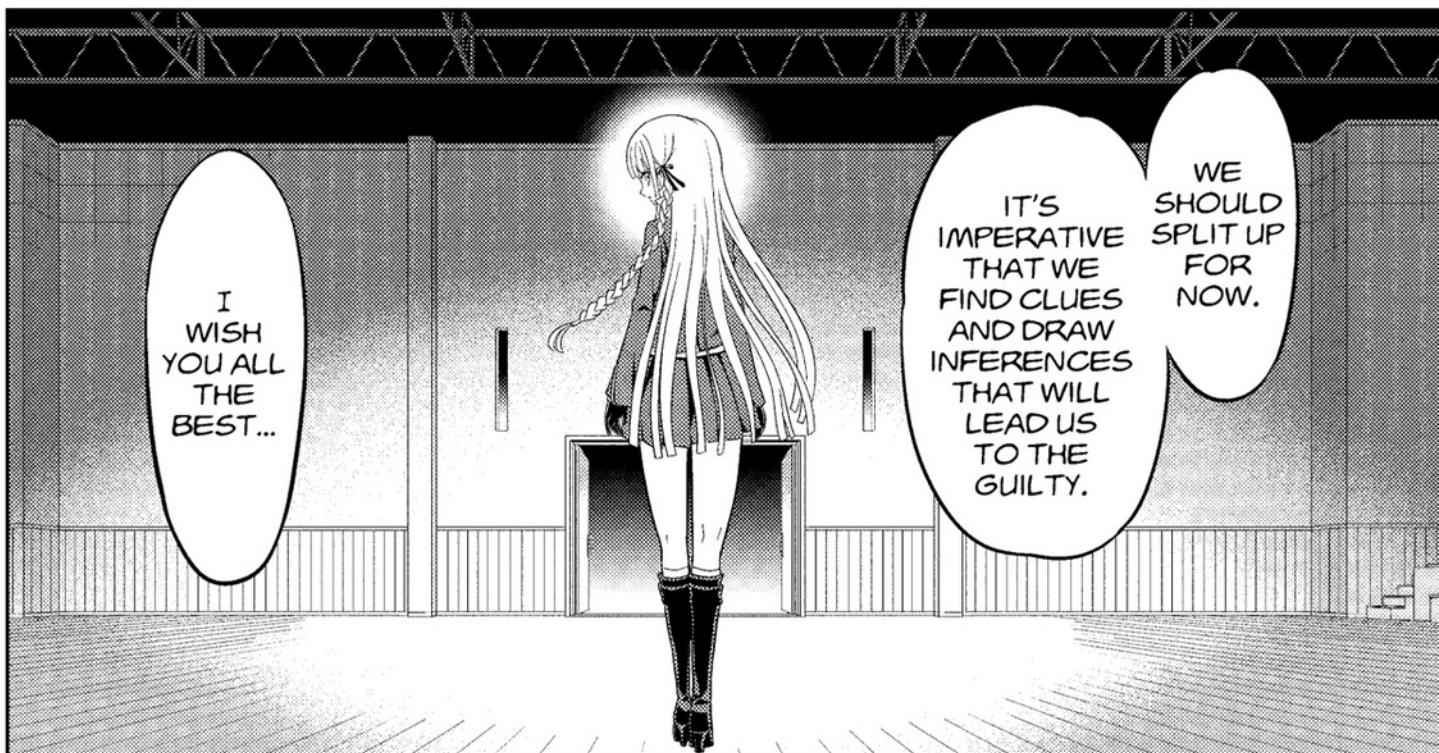


#03 [ABNORMAL ARCH: KILL AND LIVE TO SURVIVE (DEADLY LIFE)]

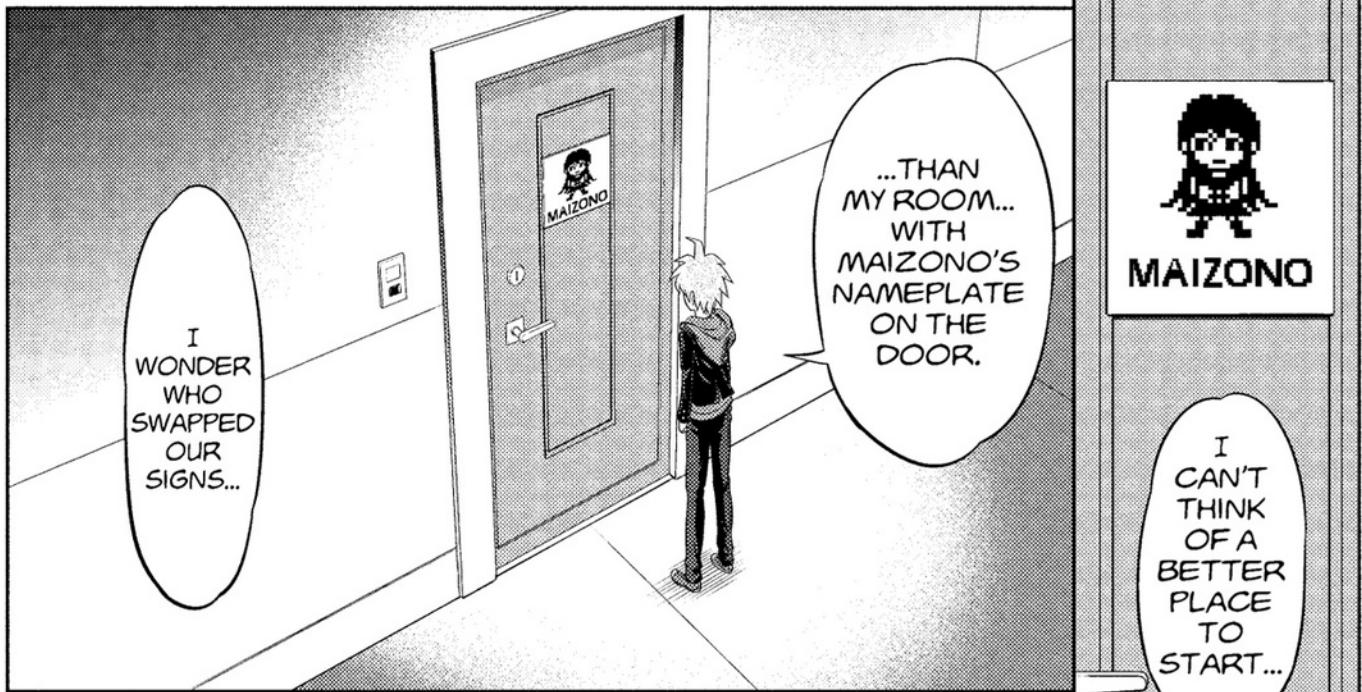


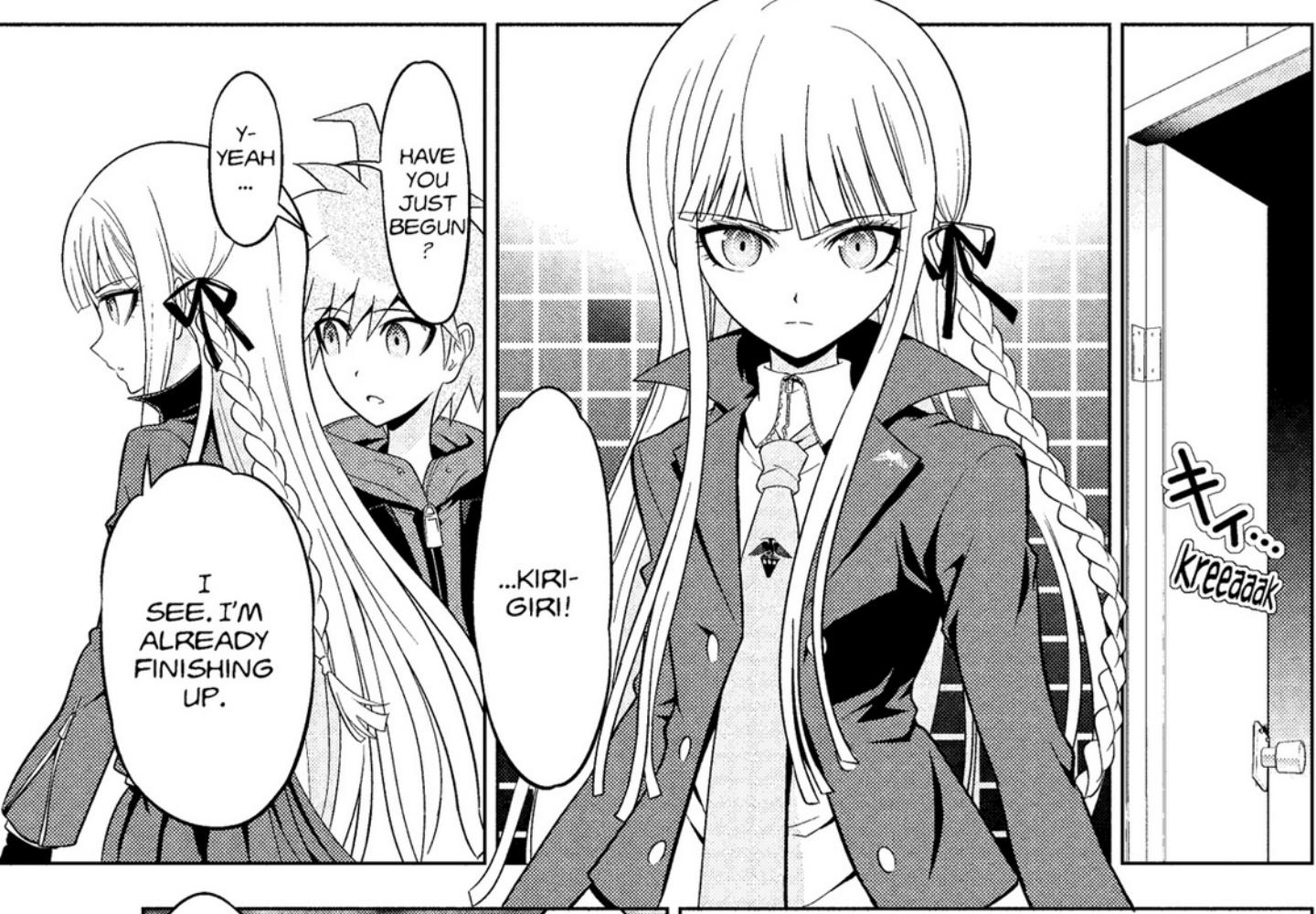










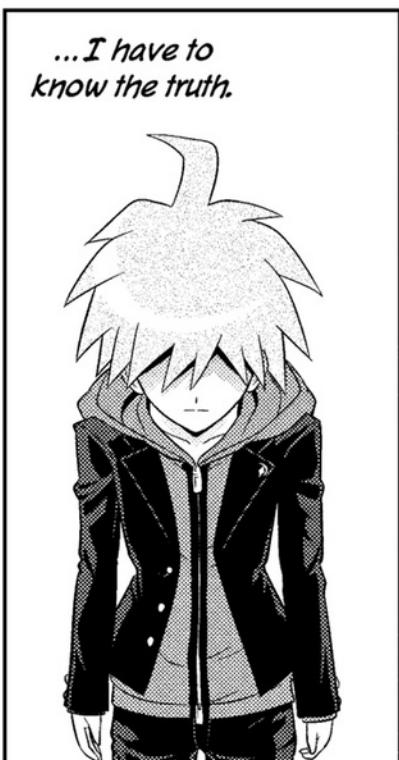
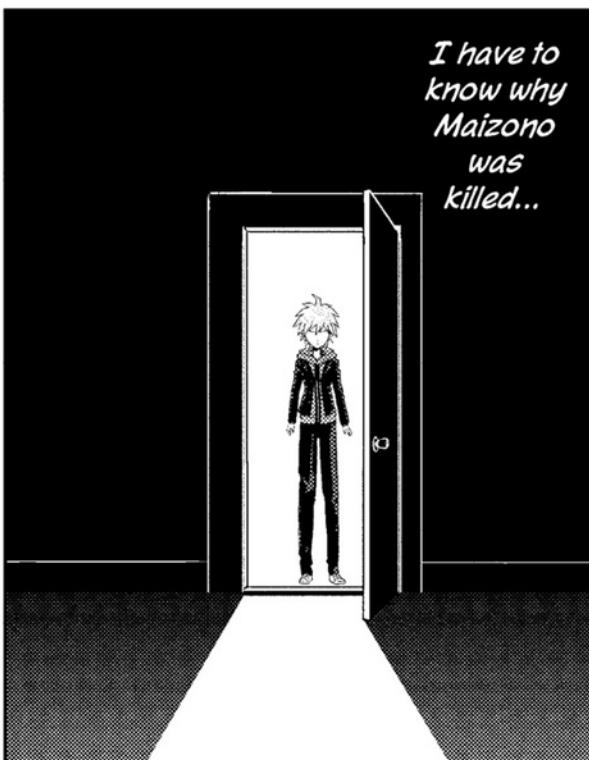






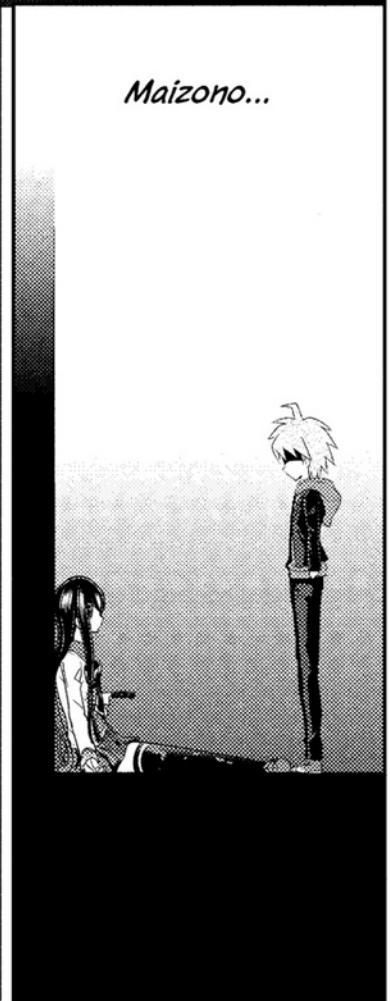




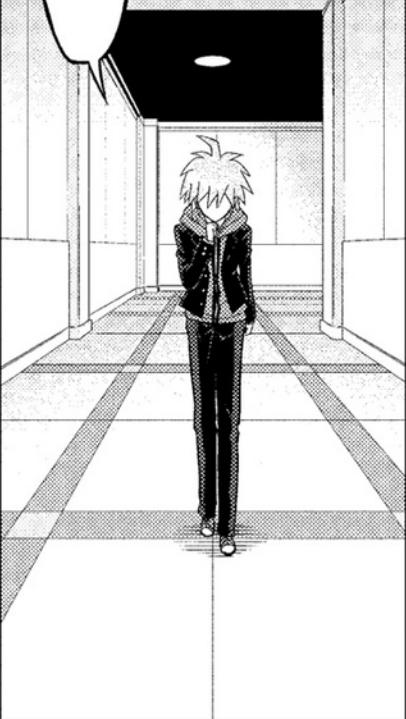
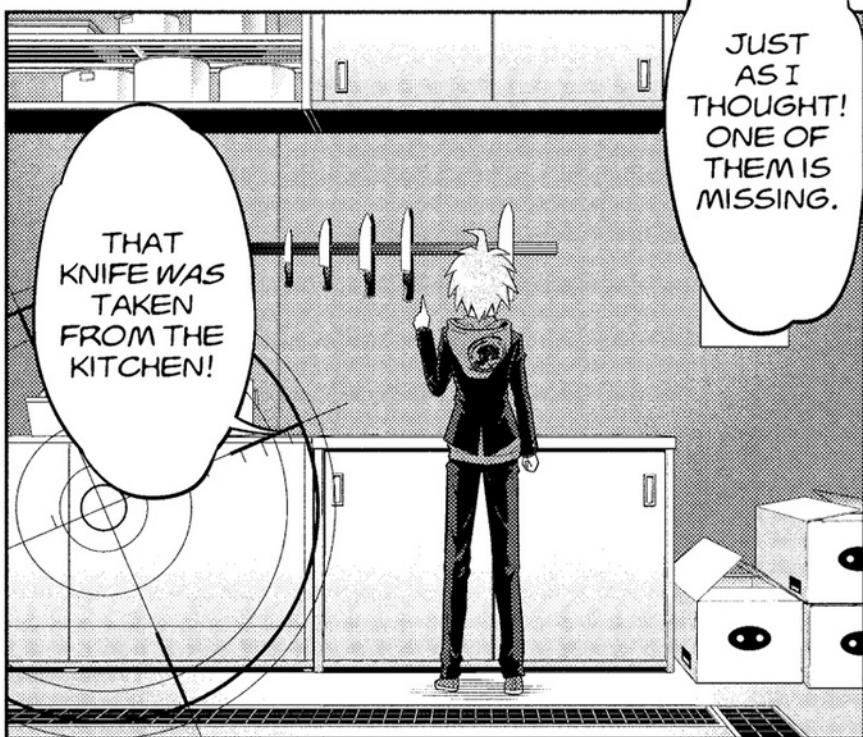




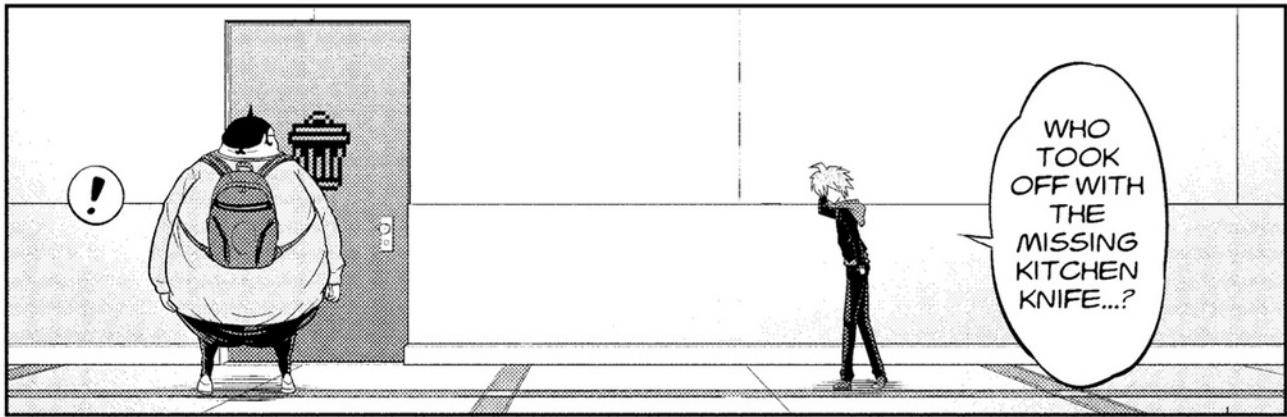
...OTHERWISE
I'LL NEVER
BE ABLE TO
ACCEPT HER
DEATH!!

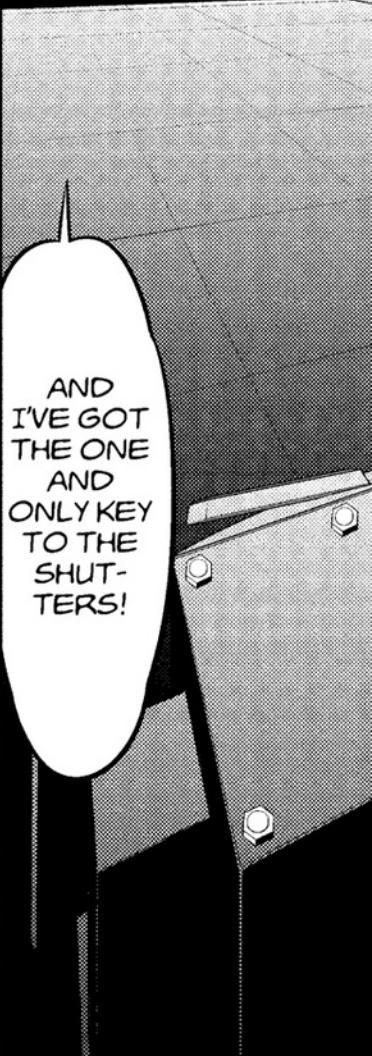
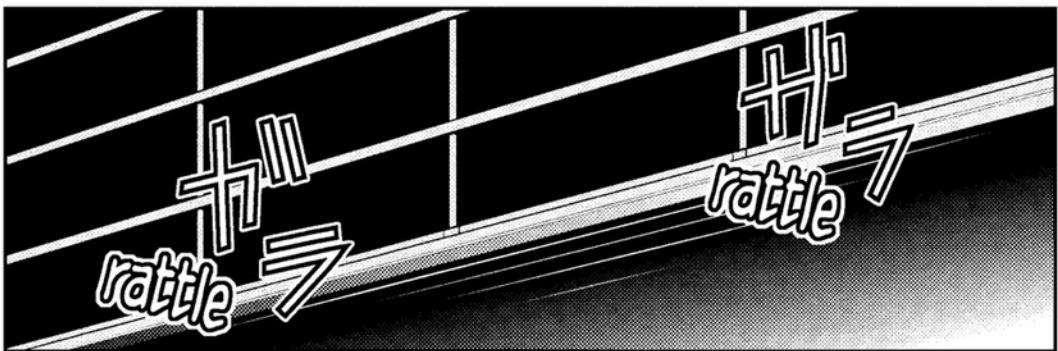
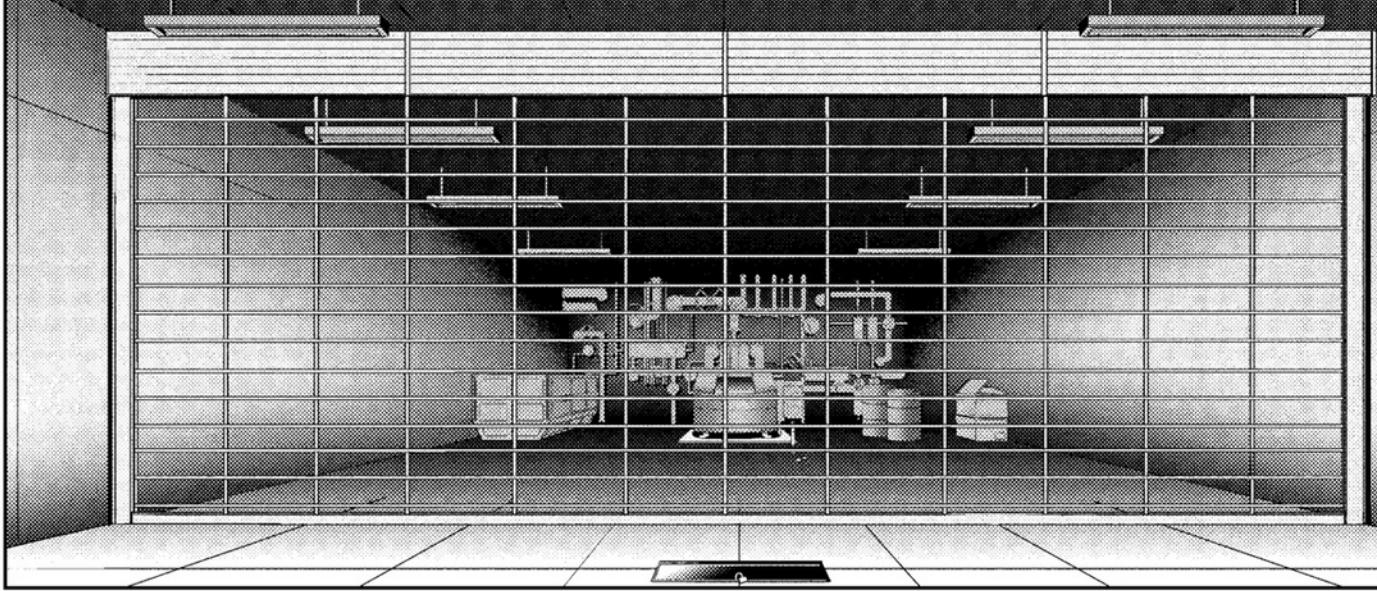










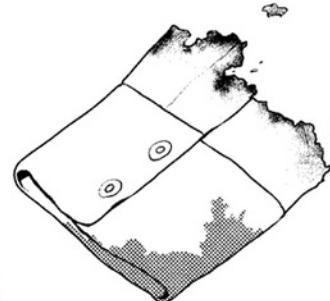


This is blood!

Chunks of broken glass...

I bet it's a piece of evidence the killer tried to destroy...!

...and a singed shirt cuff.



YAMADA! HOW DO YOU USE THE INCINERATOR ...?

FAIRY, SHOW YOURSELF!

HOW CAN THIS BE?! I MADE SURE IT WAS OFF YESTERDAY! WAS A FAIRY BEHIND THIS?!

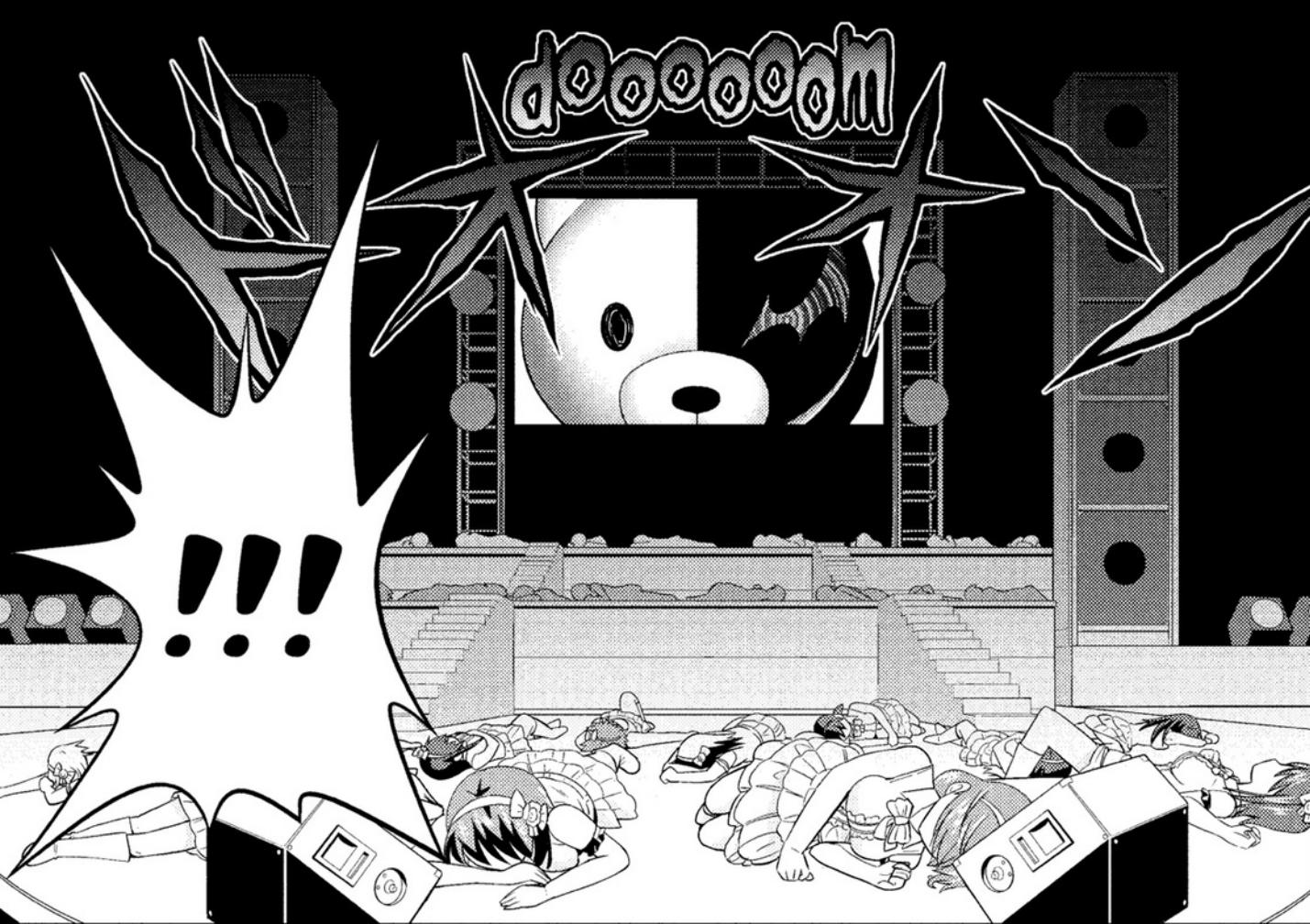
WHAT PSYCHIC POWER DID YOU USE TO TURN ON THE INCINERATOR ...?

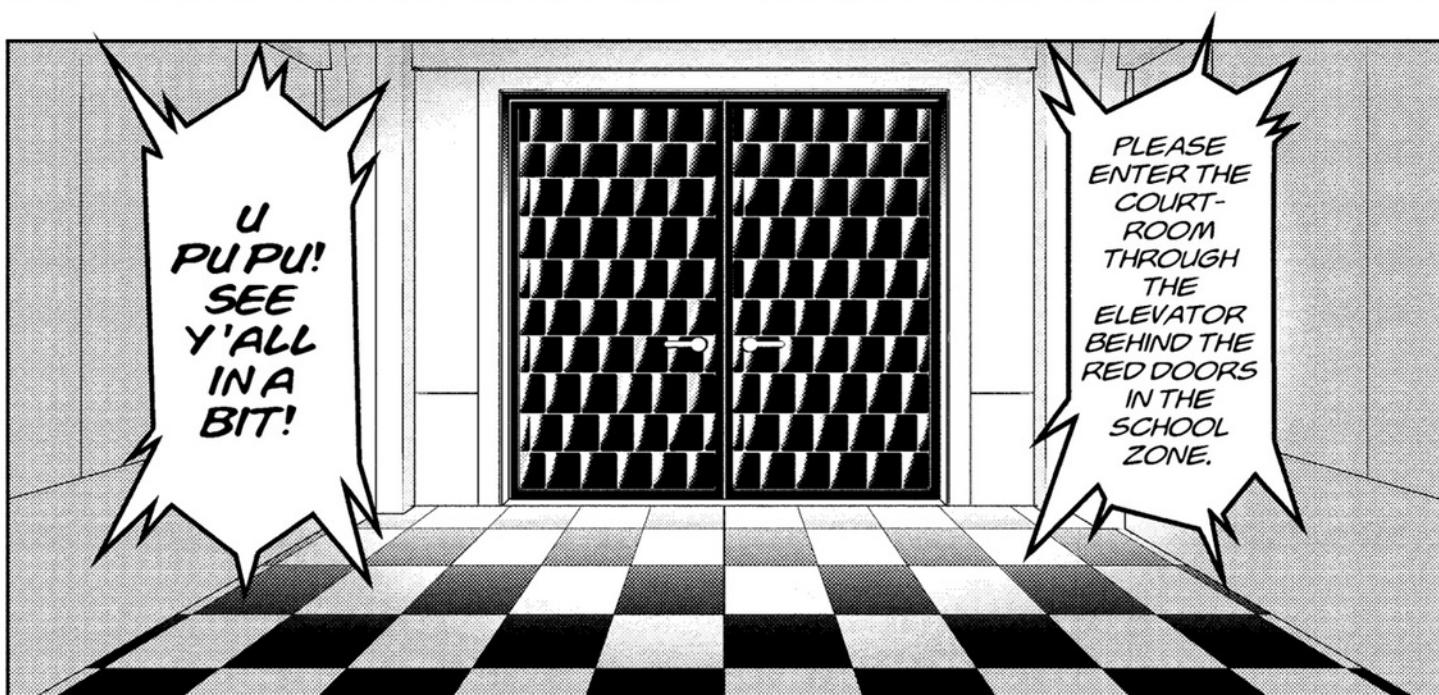
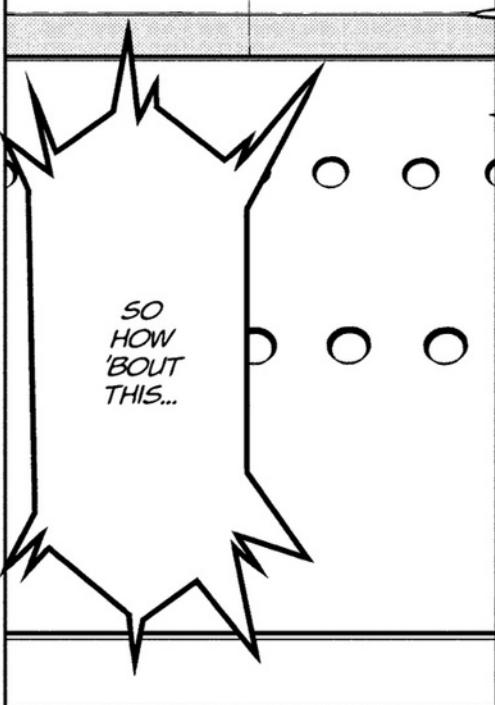
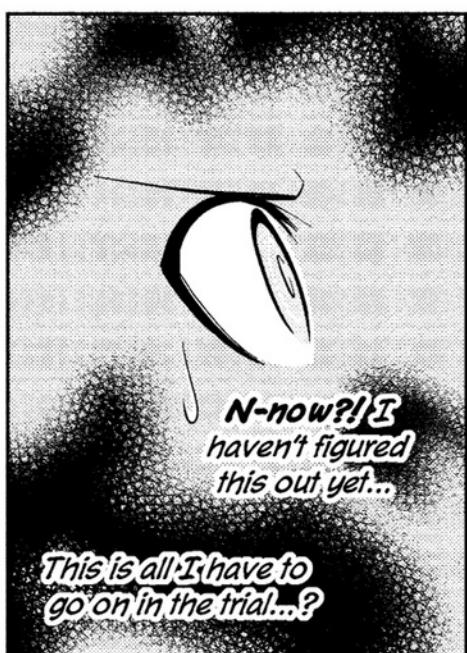
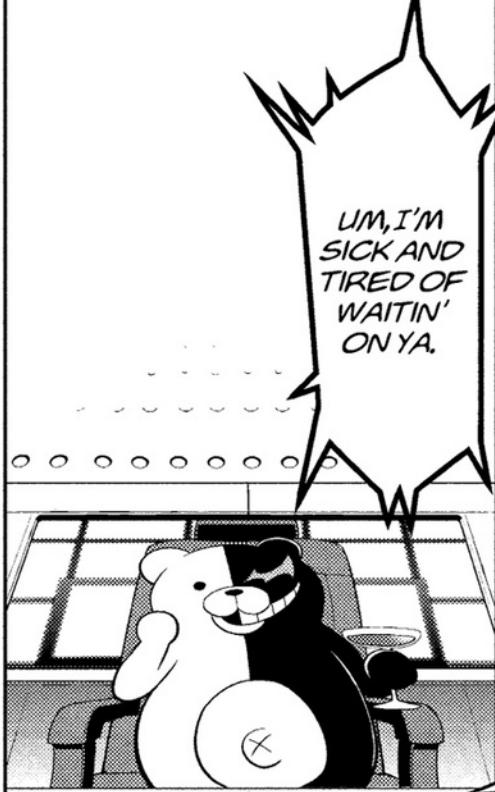
...ISN'T IT ABOUT TIME YOU FESSED UP, MR. MAKOTO NAEGI?

YOU JUST PUSH THE UPPER BUTTON TO TURN IT ON AND THE LOWER BUTTON TO TURN IT OFF. ANYWAY...

HUH?







The silence is oppressive...
no one says a word.



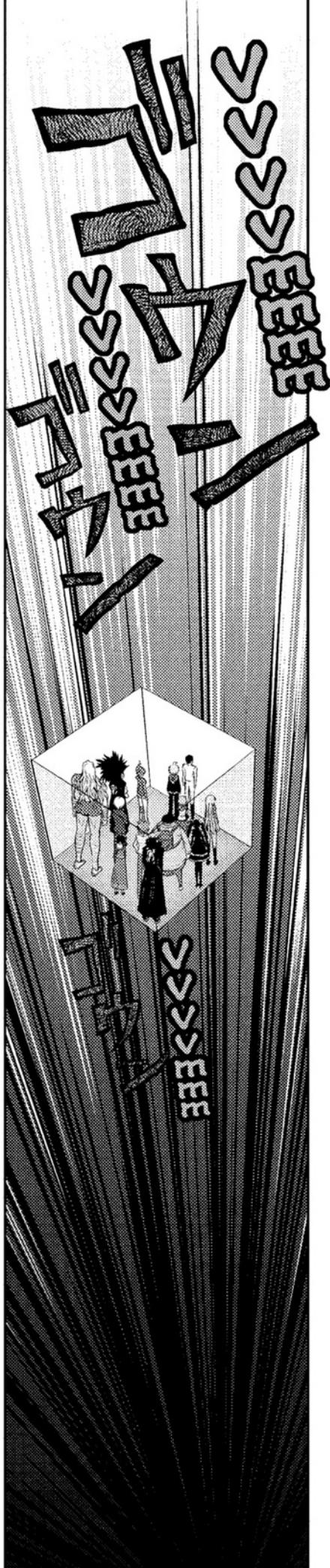
Is this how
defendants
feel as they
await their
verdict...?

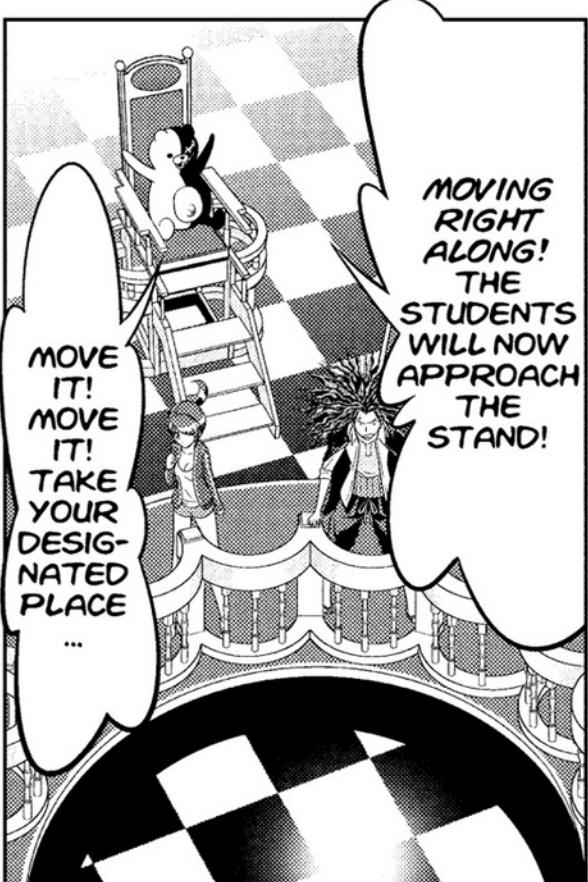


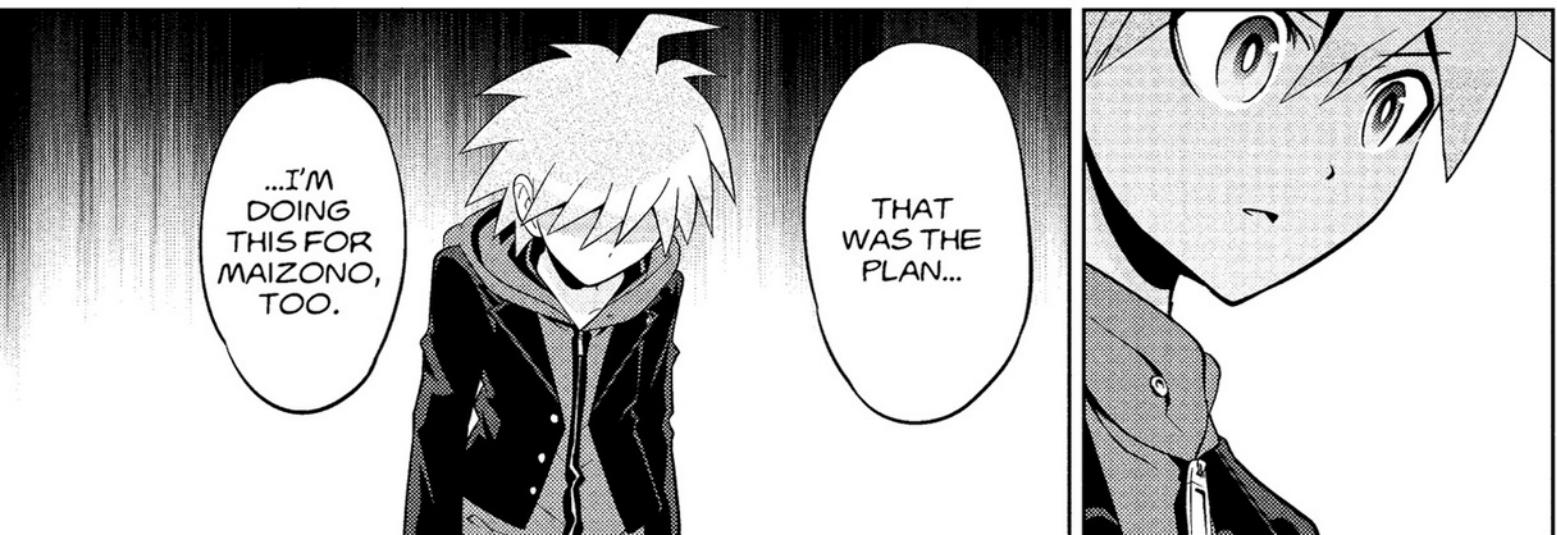
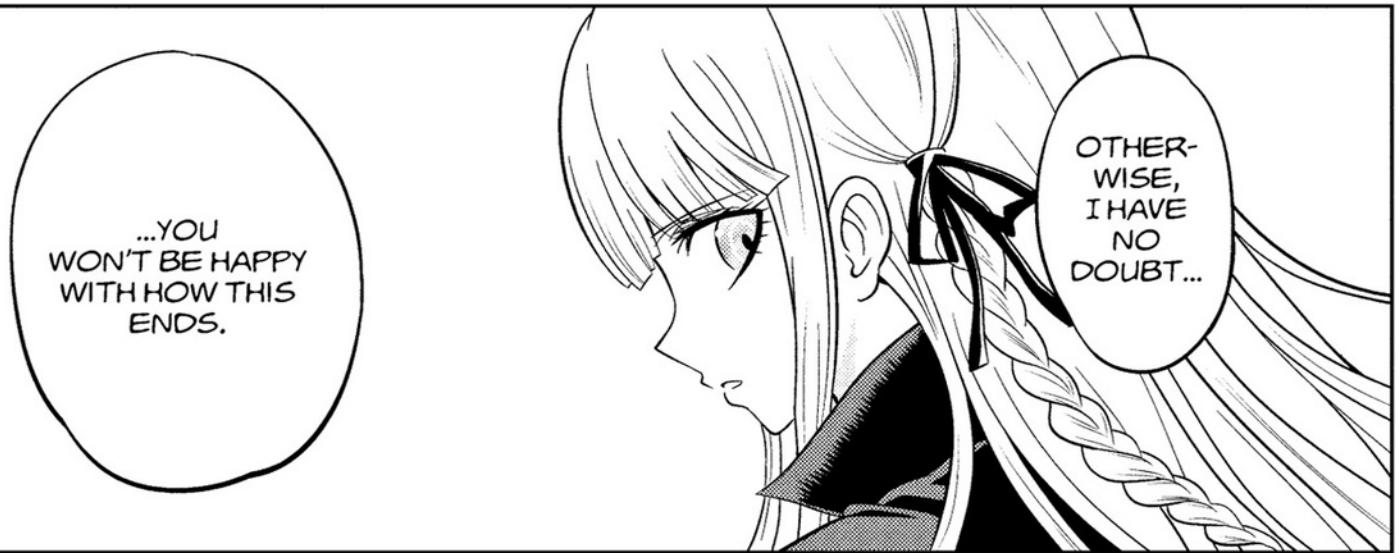
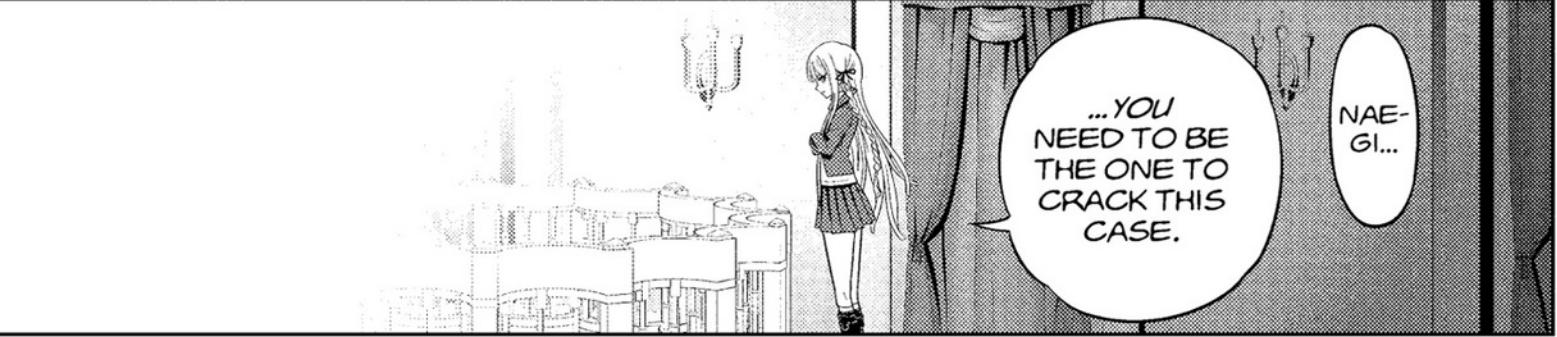
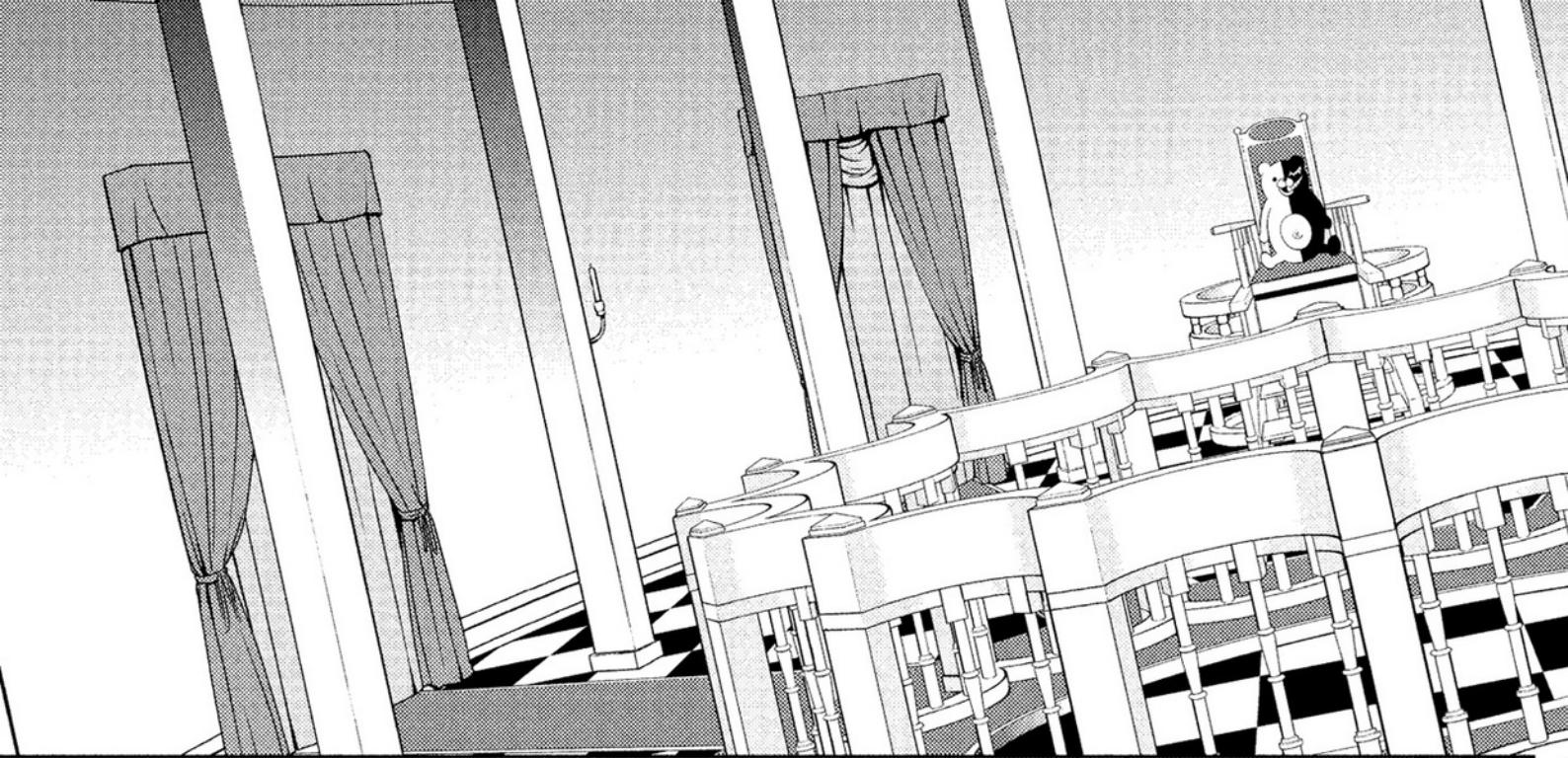
Perilous
acts of
betrayal...
in solving
a perilous
riddle.

We're all
about to
begin a
perilous
trial... a
perilous
game of
deception...

As our
lives are on
the line... in a
perilous class
trial!





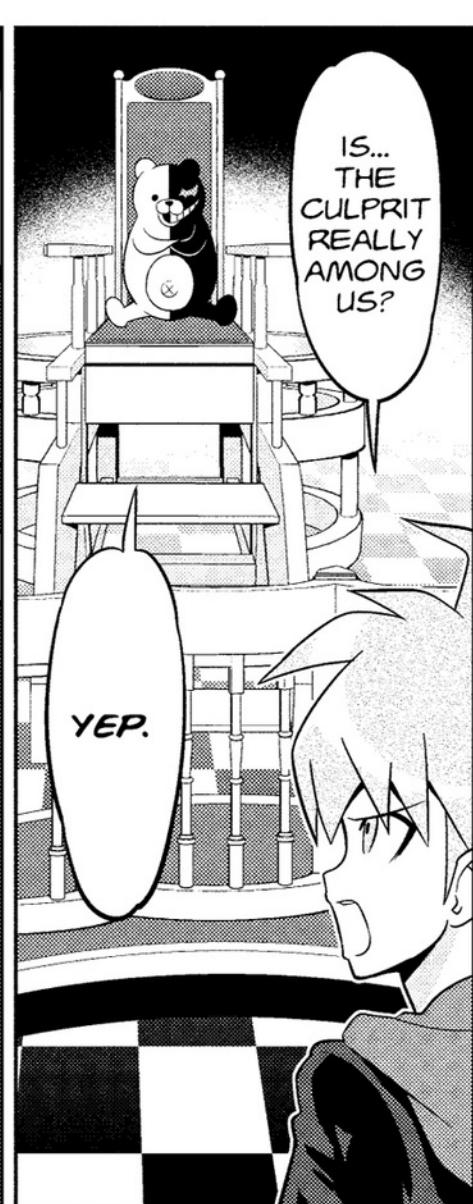
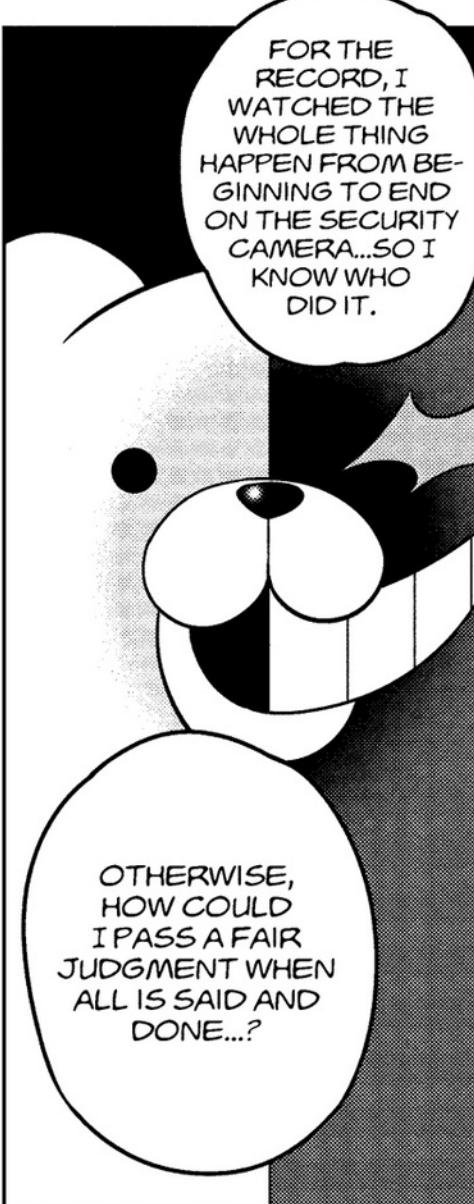


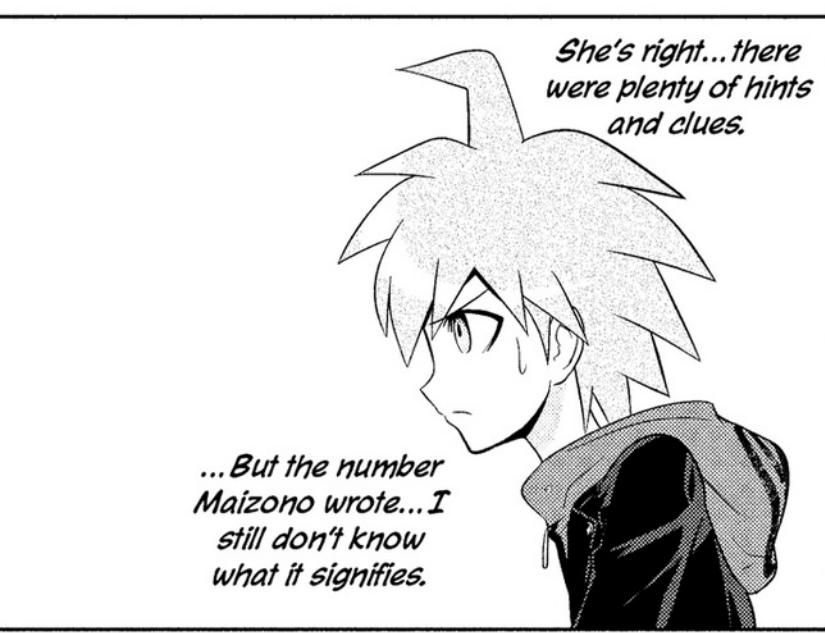
THE CLASS TRIAL...

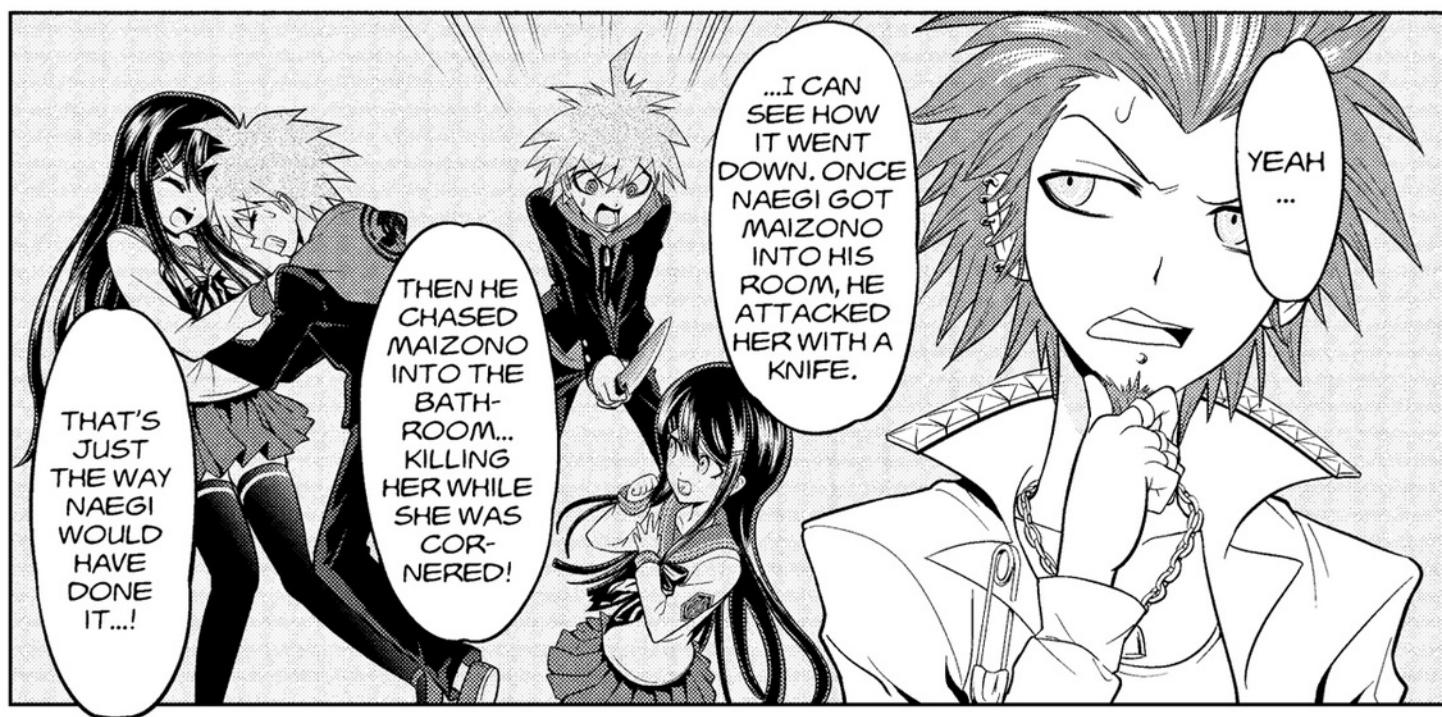


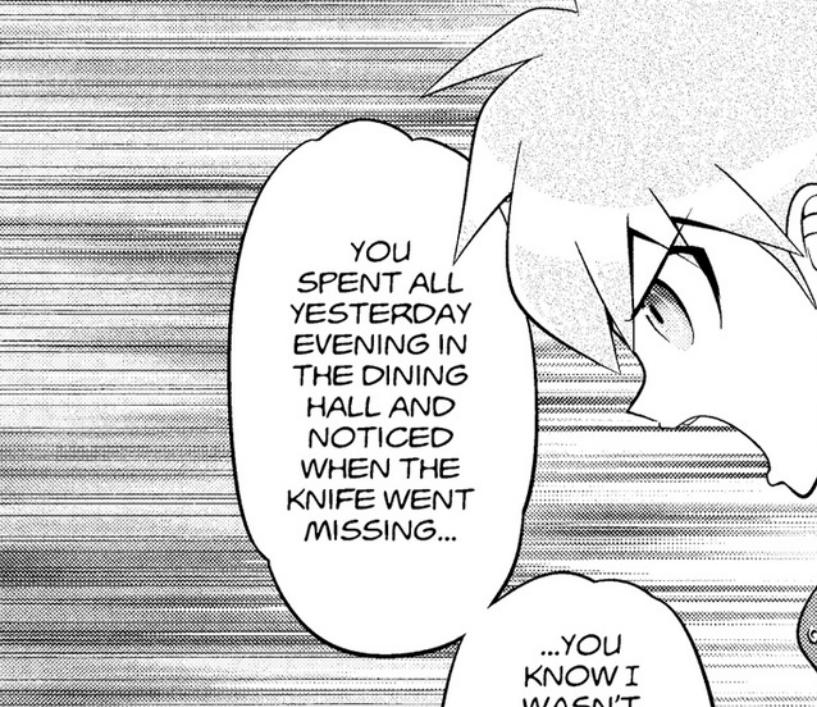


...IS NOW IN SESSION!









YOU SPENT ALL YESTERDAY EVENING IN THE DINING HALL AND NOTICED WHEN THE KNIFE WENT MISSING...

...YOU KNOW I WASN'T ANYWHERE NEAR THE DINING HALL WHEN IT DISAPPEARED!



THAT'S RIGHT! YOU DIDN'T SET FOOT IN THE DINING HALL...



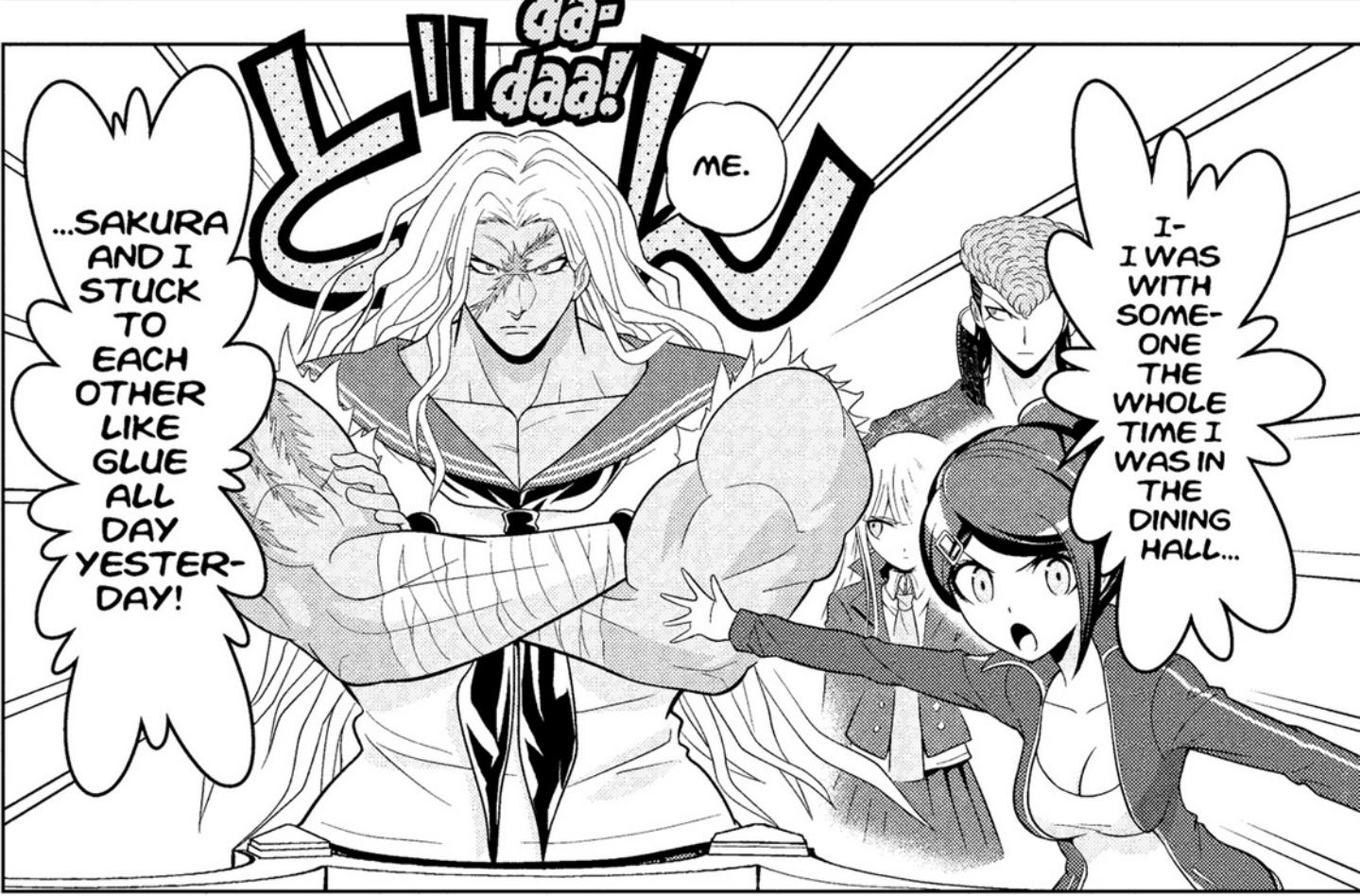
ME?

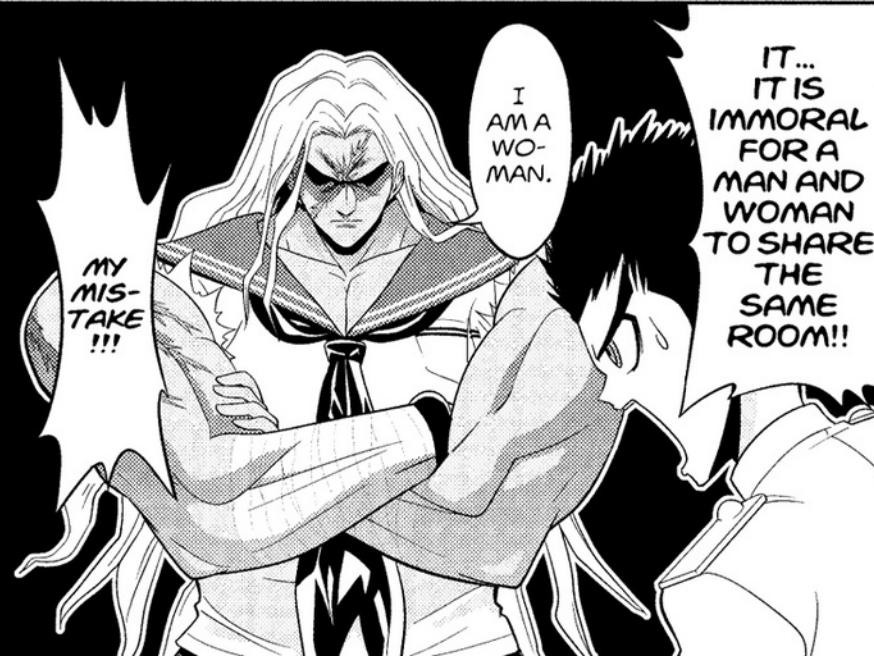
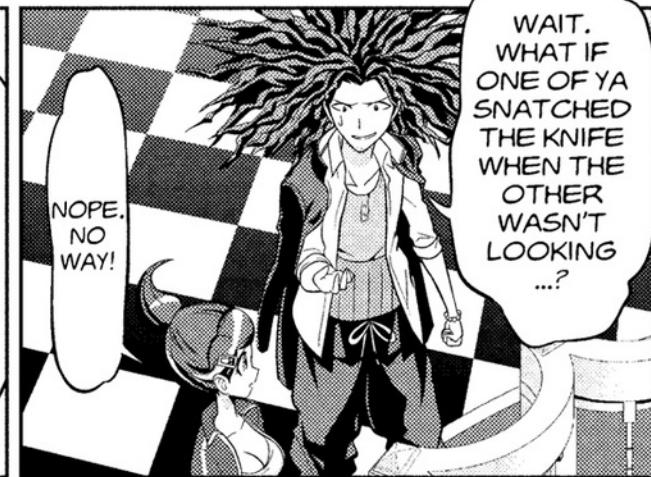
ASAHLINA!

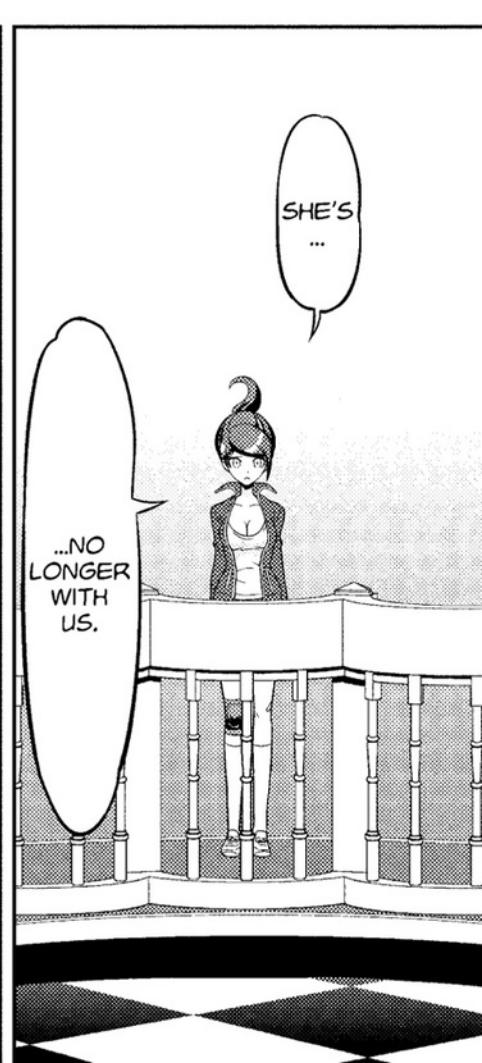
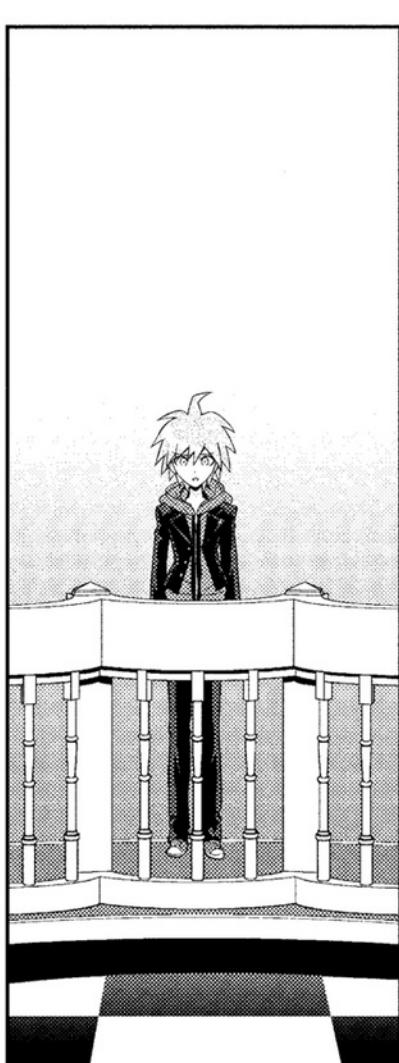
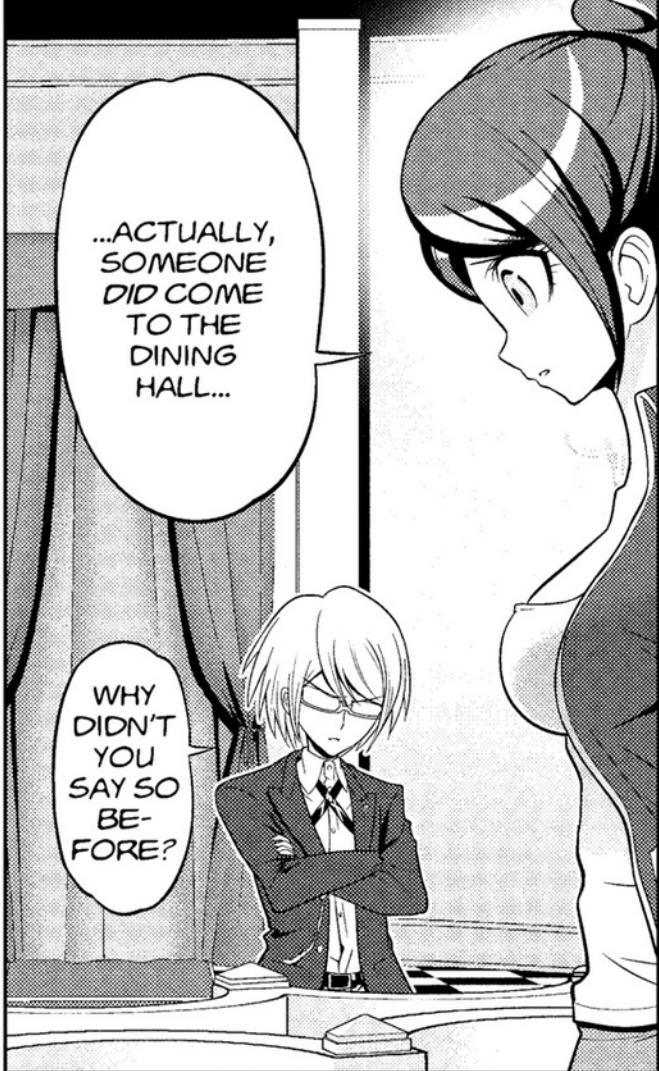
ASAHLINA, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO VOUCH FOR ME...!

da-dum!

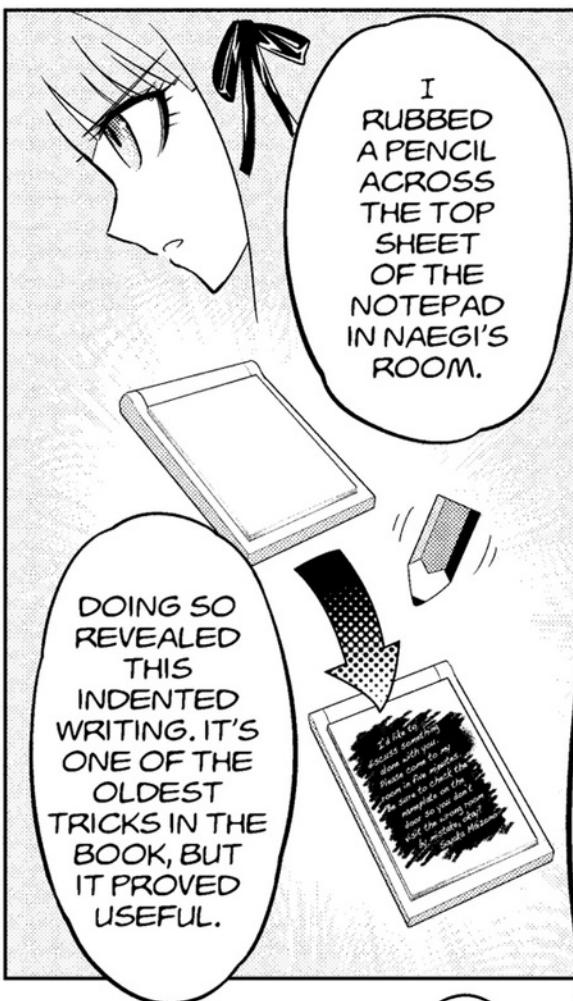
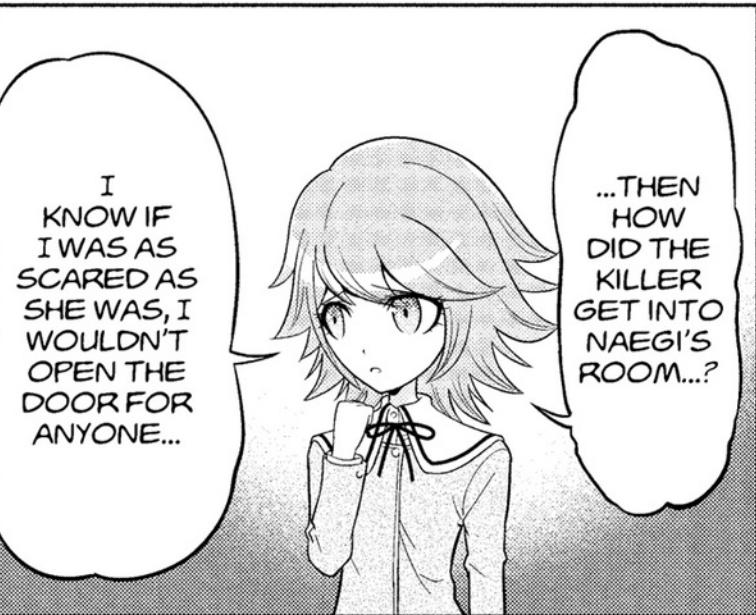


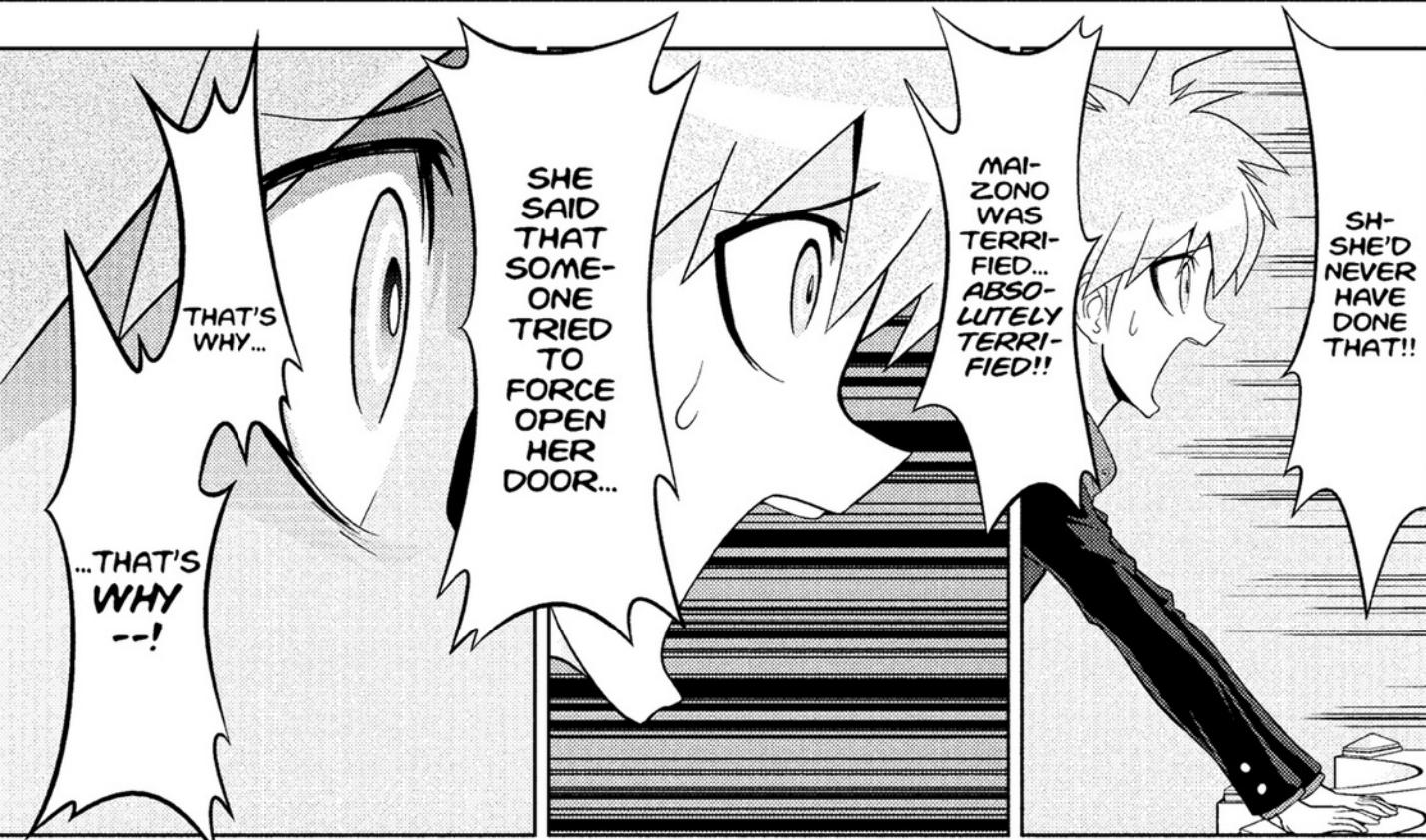








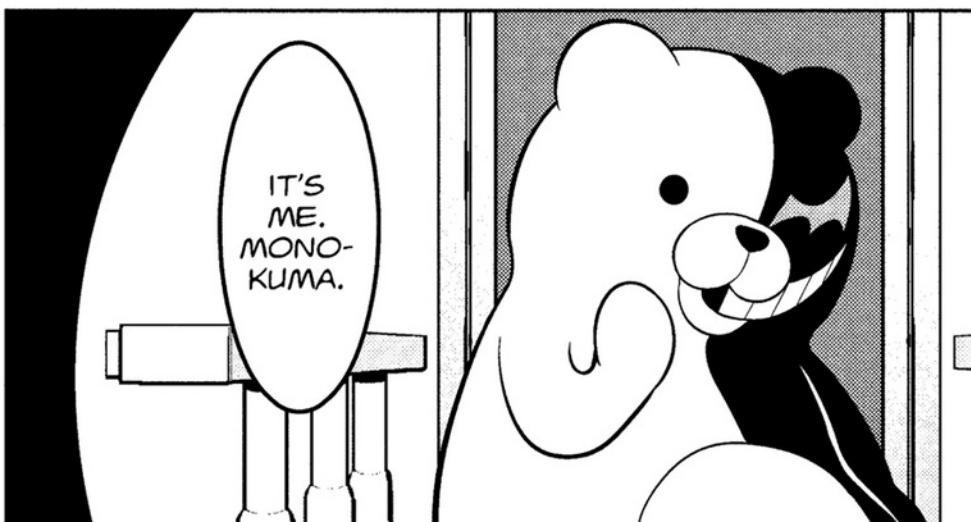
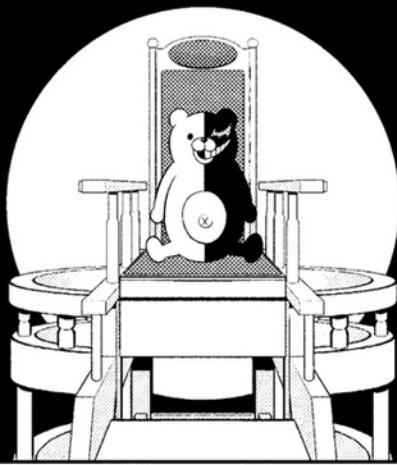


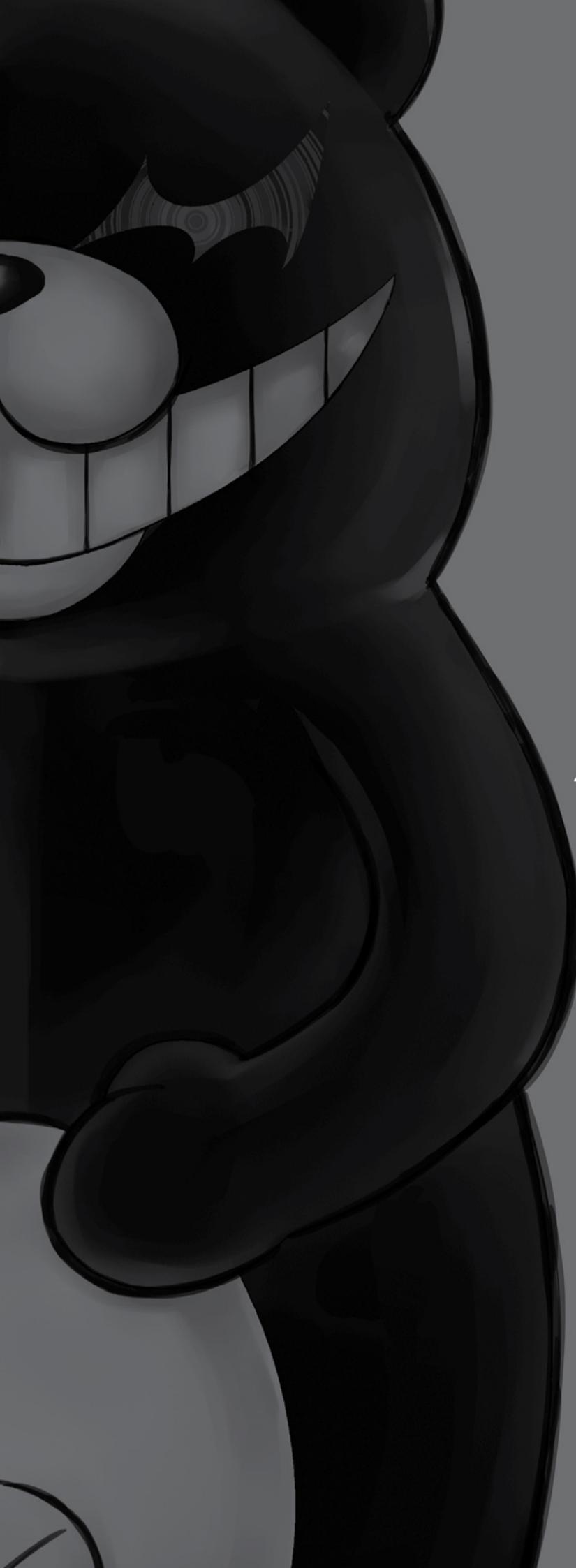


...right,
Maizono...?



That's why
you traded
rooms with
me...





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希望の学園と绝望の高校生
THE ANIMATION



DANGANRONPA

A SCHOOL OF HOPE . . . WITH STUDENTS OF DESPAIR!

THE ANIMATION

AND
IF YOU GOT
A SHORT
MEMORY,
LEMME
WALK YA
THROUGH
THE CASE
AS IT NOW
STANDS!!

OUR
TWO-PAGE
RECESS
IS OVER!
BACK TO
THE CLASS
TRIAL IN
SESSION!!

AS FAR
AS THEY'RE
CONCERNED,
THIS IS A
QUESTION OF
LIFE OR DEATH...
SIMILAR TO
WHETHER A
BEAR SHOULD
TAKE A
BEEHIVE
BACK TO
ITS DEN!

KYAAAAAA!
BUT IF
SOME GIRL
DOESN'T
INVITE YA
INTO HER
ROOM...
THERE'S A
REASON FOR
IT.

I won't let anyone in!

FROM
THE
SOUND OF
THINGS,
MAIZONO
LET THE
PUNK WHO
KILLED
HER INTO
THE
ROOM!

Hello! Won't
you come inside?

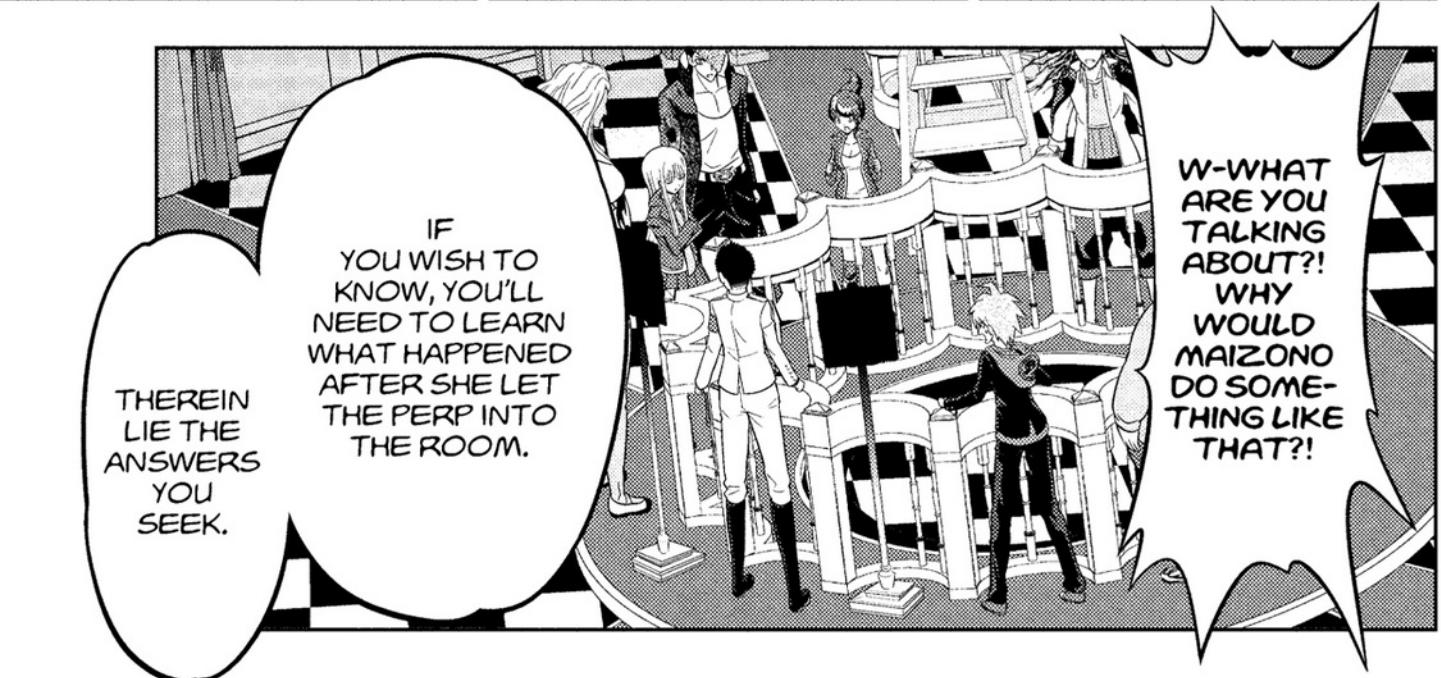
...in the
final
stage of
the class
trial?

Can you
win the
debate...



#04 [ABNORMAL ARC: KILL AND
LIVE TO SURVIVE (DEADLY LIFE) II]







IT
HAD A
GOUGE MADE
BY A BLADED
INSTRUMENT.
HOW DO YOU
THINK THAT GOT
THERE?

RE-
MEMBER
THE
SHEATH
...?

WHAT
IF THEY
GRABBED
FOR THE
REPLICA
TO DEFEND
THEMSELVES
FROM A
SURPRISE
KNIFE
ATTACK...

NOW
LET'S FLIP
THINGS
AROUND.

SO YOU
MEAN TO
SAY THAT
THE KILLER
ATTACKED
WHILE THE
SWORD
WAS STILL
SHEATHED
?

WELL...
MAIZONO
MADE IT
WHEN SHE
WAS TRYING
TO FIGHT
BACK...

...USING THE
SHEATHED
SWORD AT
FIRST TO
PARRY THE
KNIFE
BLOW?

...IN
WHICH
CASE,
WHERE
DOES THAT
GOUGE
FIT INTO
THIS?

PEOPLE
GEN-
ER-
ALLY
ATTACK
WITH THE
SWORD
DRAWN.

IN OTHER WORDS,
THE EVIDENCE
INDICATES
THAT
MAIZONO
INITIATED
THE
ATTACK!

!!!!

da-dum!

SO
MAIZONO
WAS A FAR
CRY FROM AN
INNOCENT
VICTIM-SHE
WAS THE
AGGRESSOR!
ISN'T THAT
RIGHT,
NAEGI?

THIS IS
STARTING
TO GET
INTER-
ESTING.

H-
HOLD ON!
SHE'D
NEVER DO
SOMETHING
LIKE--

I KNOW
YOU DON'T
WANT TO
THINK
ABOUT
WHAT THAT
WOULD
MEAN...







IT WAS
ALL A RUSE...
TO TURN
NAEGI'S
ROOM INTO
THE SCENE
OF THE
CRIME.



HA! HA! HA!
HA! HA!
AREN'T
WOMEN
TERRIFYING,
NAEGI...?

HEH,
HEH...A
CALCULATING
WOMAN. I
SUSPECT
THE VIXEN
TOOK YOUR
PERSONALITY
INTO
ACCOUNT
WHEN
DEVISING
THE PLAN.

Maizono...

IF
MAIZONO
HAD
MANAGED
TO KILL HER
TARGET,
WHAT
ARE THE
CHANCES
YOU'D TELL
US ABOUT
THE ROOM
SWAP...?!

YOU'RE
SUCH A
GUL-
LIBLE
FOOL,
NAEGI!!

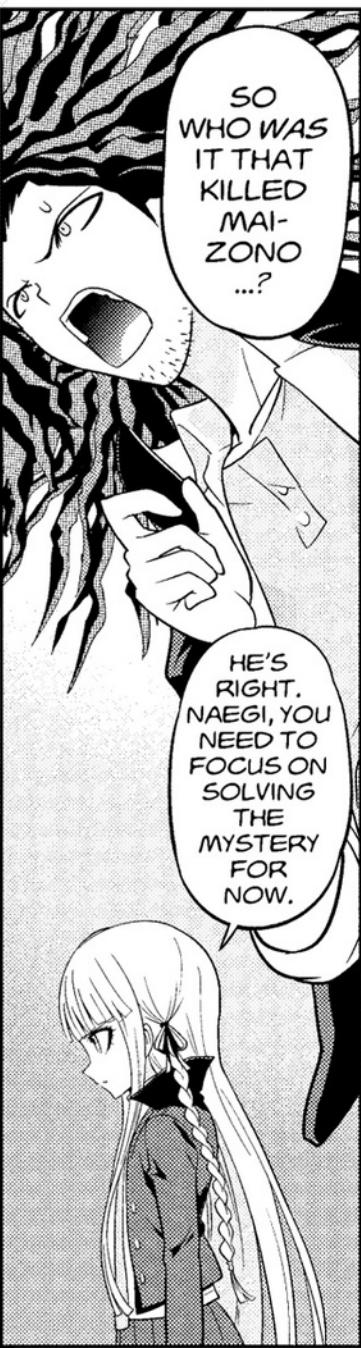
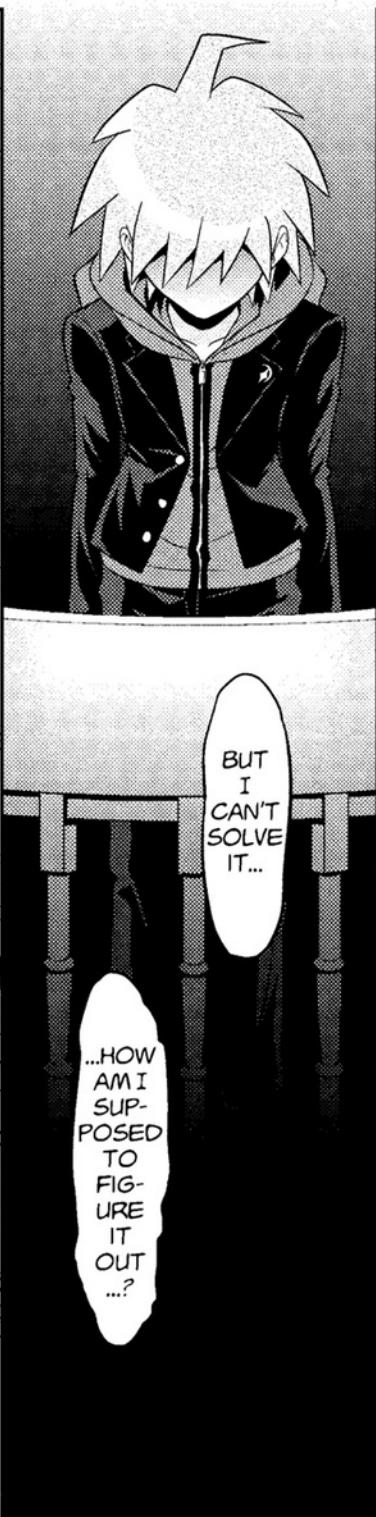
IT WAS
ALL A
CHARADE,
DON'T YOU
SEE?

...COME
WHAT
MAY, WE'LL
ALWAYS
HAVE EACH
OTHER'S
BACKS!!

OF
COURS
I WILL

...that we had
each other's
backs...

We said...









IN
ENGLISH...
IT SPELLS
"LEON."

ISN'T
THAT
YOUR
FIRST
NAME...
LEON
KUWATA
?



SO NOW I'M THE KILLER, NOT YOU?! DON'T GIVE ME THAT BULL--

THAT'S JUST SOME FREAK COINCIDENCE! THE NUMBERS TURN INTO MY NAME IF YOU FLIP 'EM AROUND?! THAT'S THE MOST FAR-FETCHED CRAP I'VE EVER HEARD!

W- WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT ...?

BURNED...?! TH-THAT ISN'T ENOUGH TO PIN THE RAP ON ME!

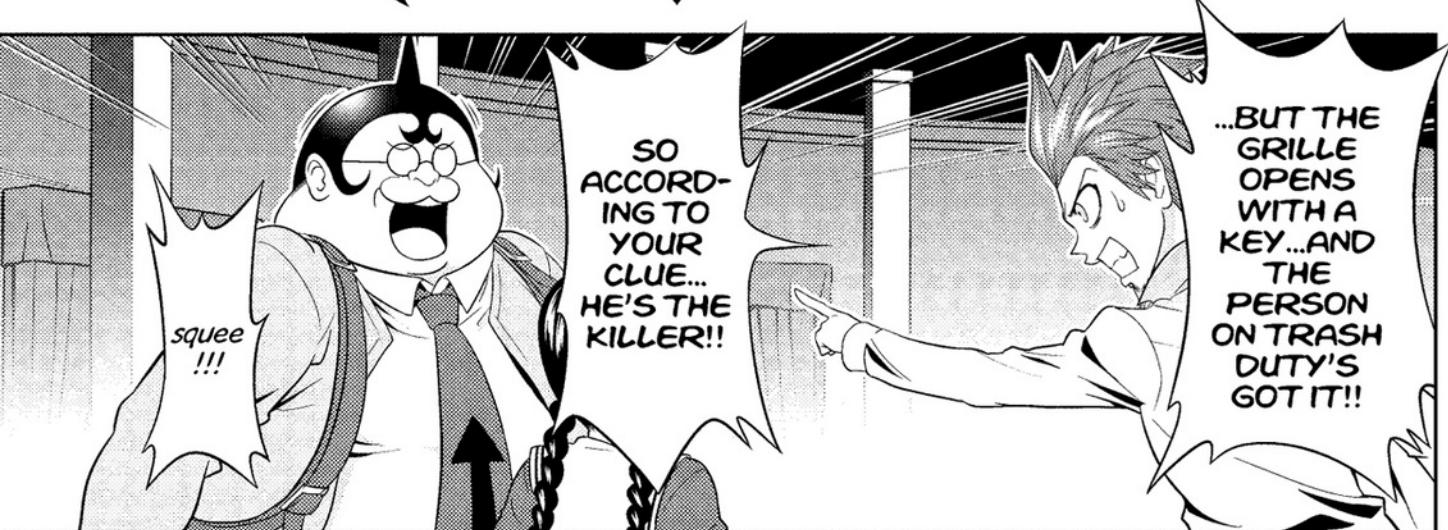
I FOUND A BURNED SHIRT CUFF WITH BLOODSTAINS ON IT IN FRONT OF THE INCINERATOR.

IT'S NOT LIKE I'M THE ONLY GUY WEARIN' A SHIRT AROUND HERE....!

WHEN YOU STABBED MAIZONO, SOME OF HER BLOOD GOT ON YOUR SHIRT... ISN'T THAT WHY YOU TRIED TO DISPOSE OF IT?

KUWATA... DIDN'T YOU GO TO THE TRASH ROOM LAST NIGHT?

UH- WHAT?! OF COURSE NOT!!





...HOW
COULD
ANYONE
USE IT THE
WAY YOU
SAID....?

WHAT'RE
YOU TRYIN'
TO PROVE
WITH THAT
THING,
ANYWAY....?

NO ONE
COULD
THROW
THAT BALL
WITH SUCH
PRECISION
....!!

DID YA
NOTICE THE
SIZE OF THE
BUTTON? AND
THAT THERE'S
TEN METERS
BETWEEN
THE GRILLE
AND THE
INCINERATOR
...?

IT'S
THAT
ONLY
YOU
COULD
HAVE
DONE
IT.

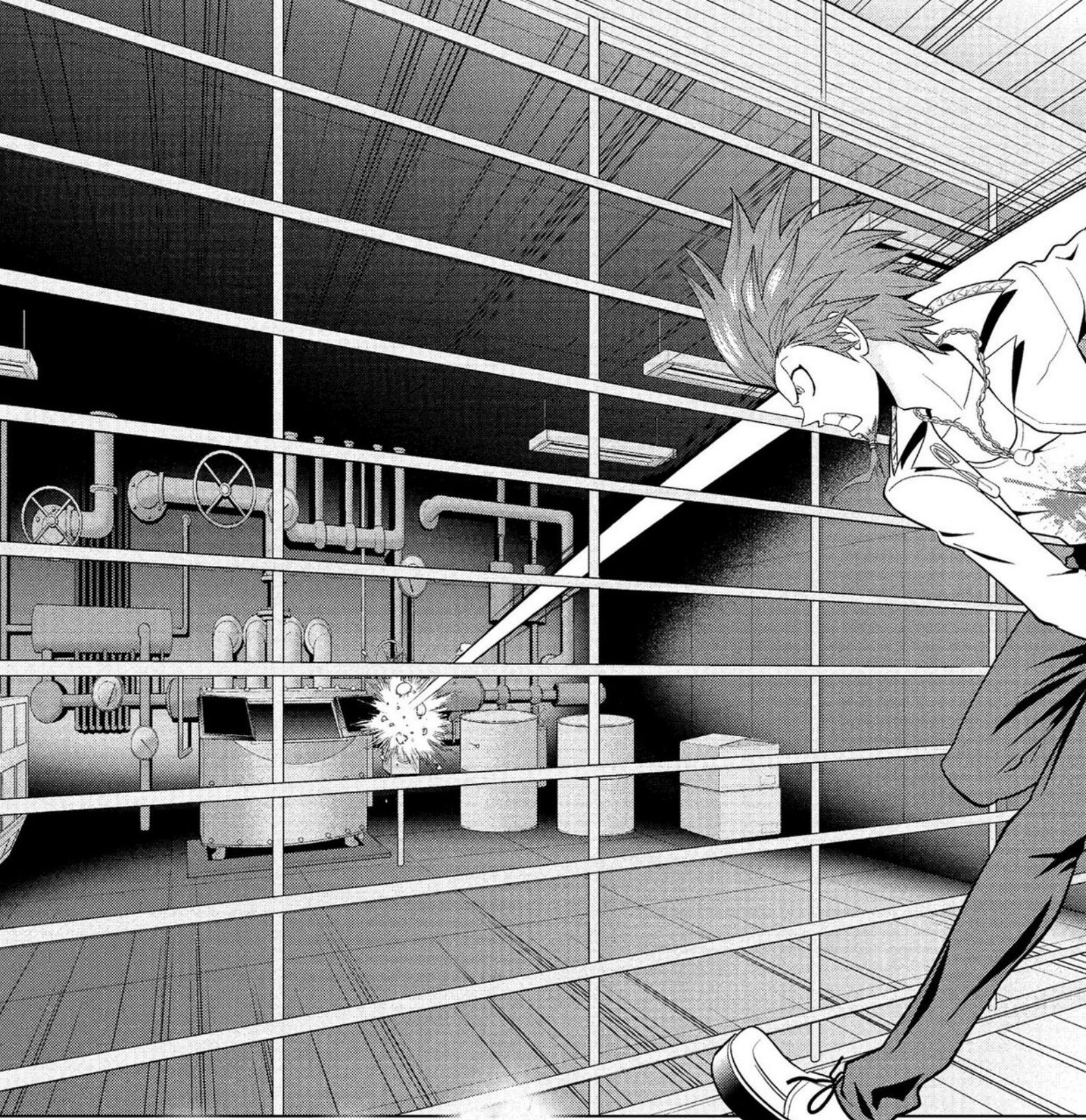
IT
ISN'T
THAT
NO
ONE
COULD
HAVE
DONE
IT.

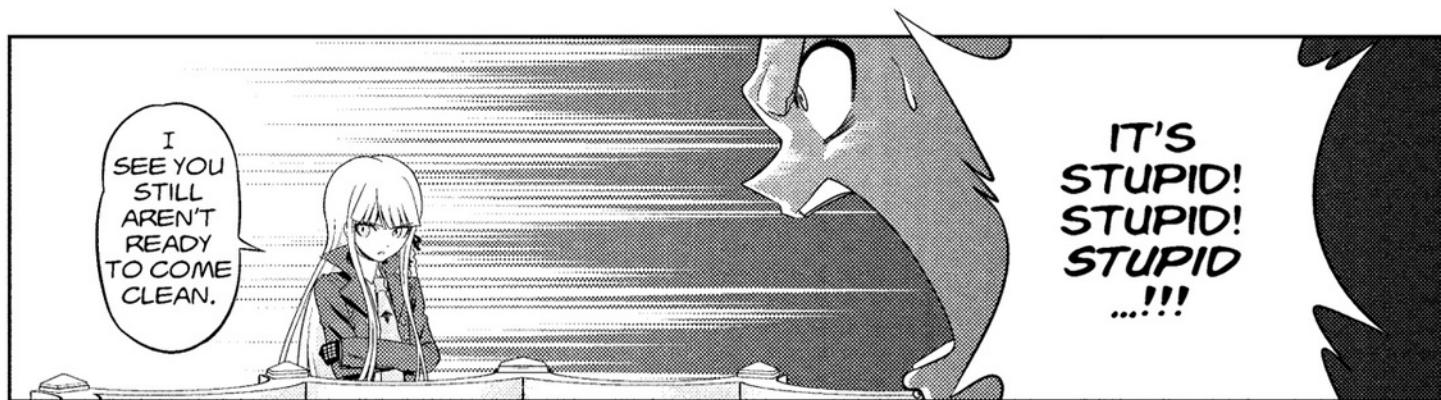


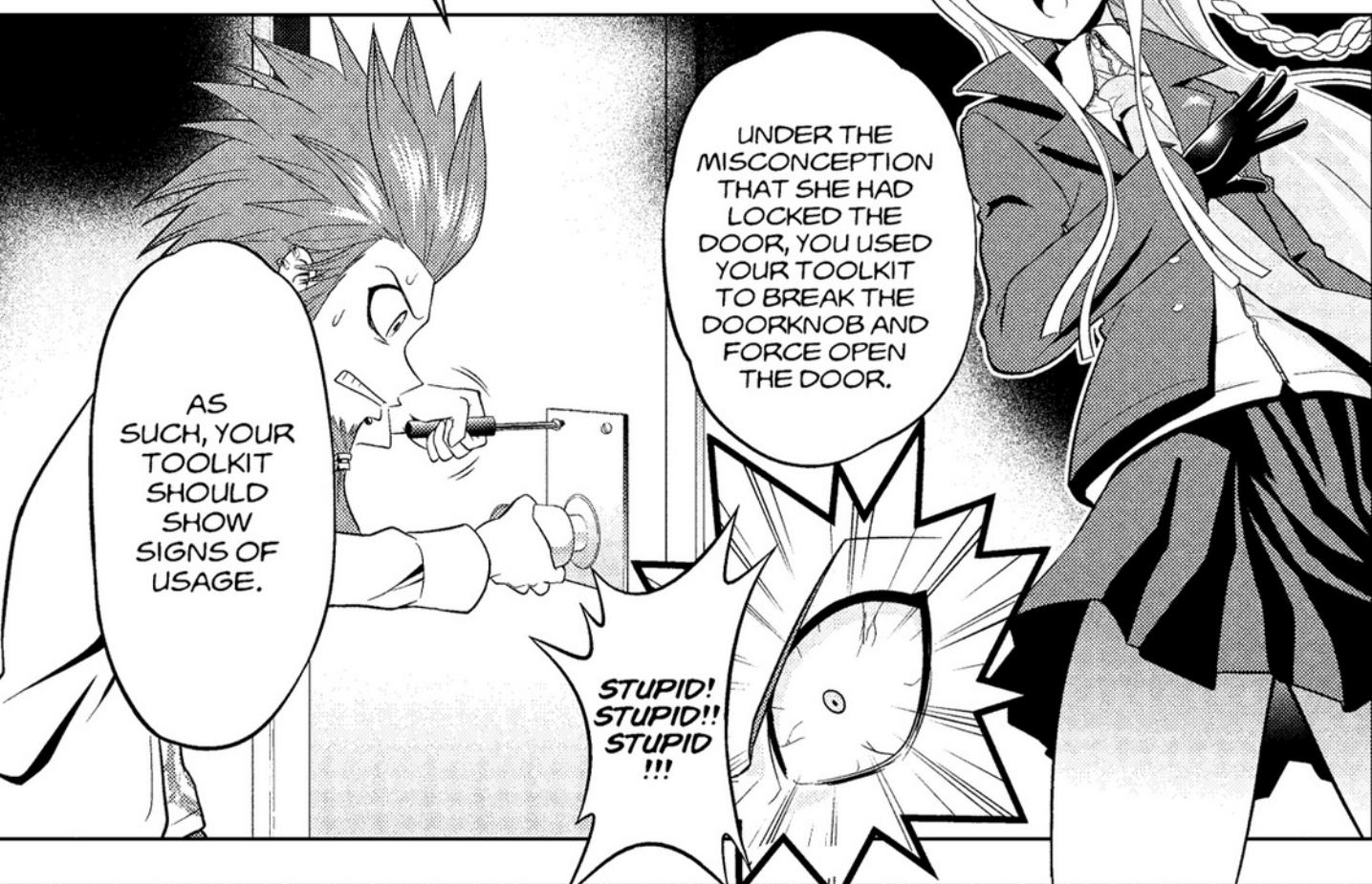
THE
"ULTIMATE
BASEBALL
STAR"
WAS
BEHIND
THIS
MURDER
!!!

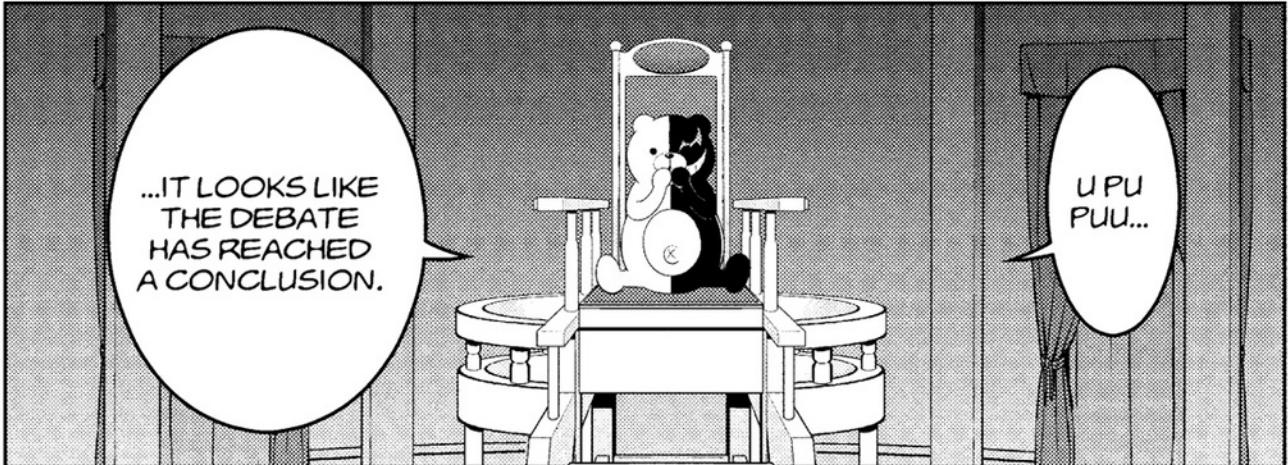


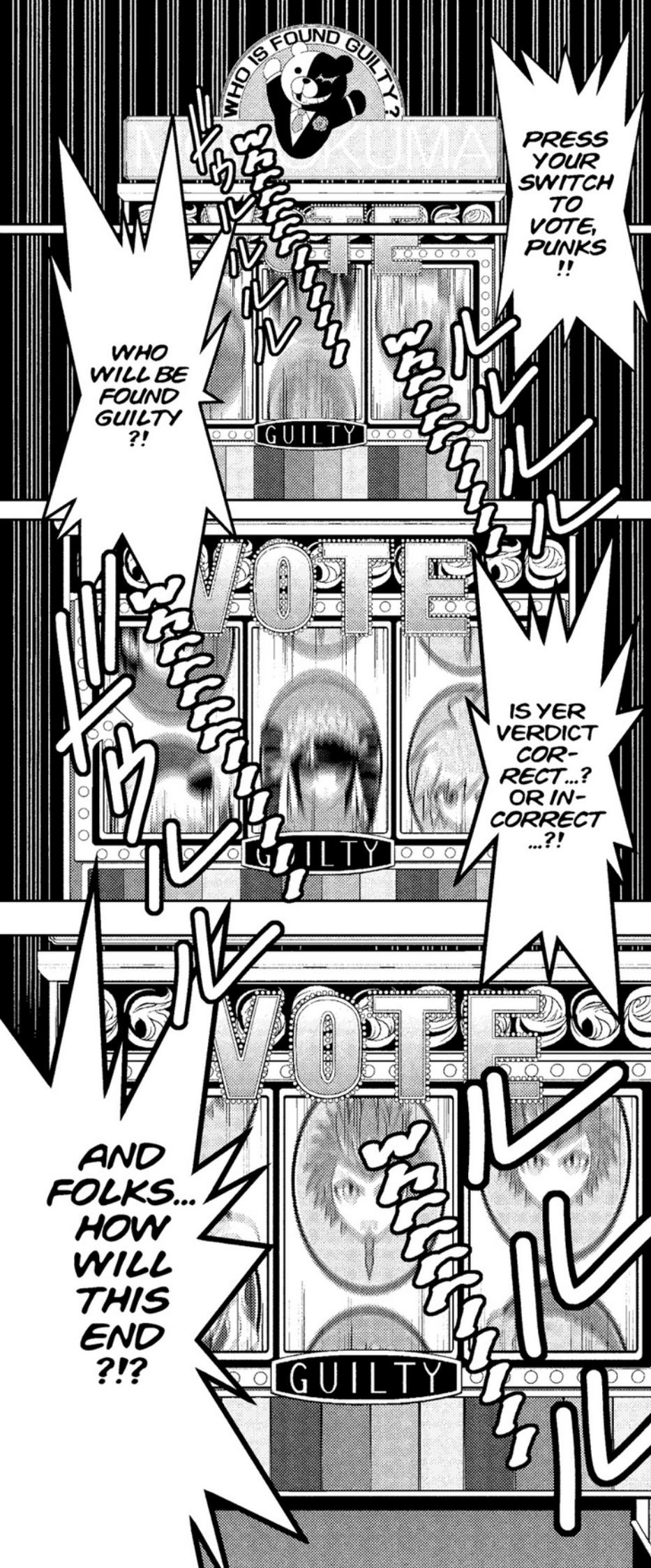
FLITER

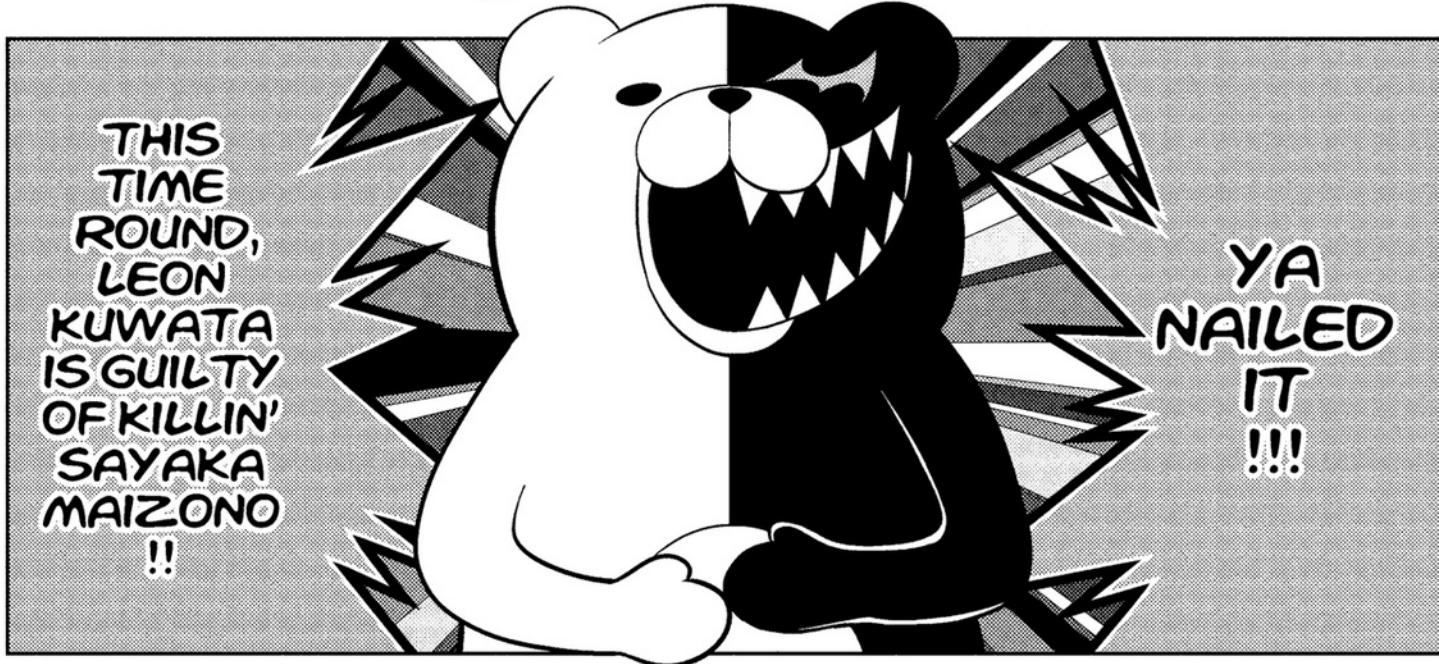




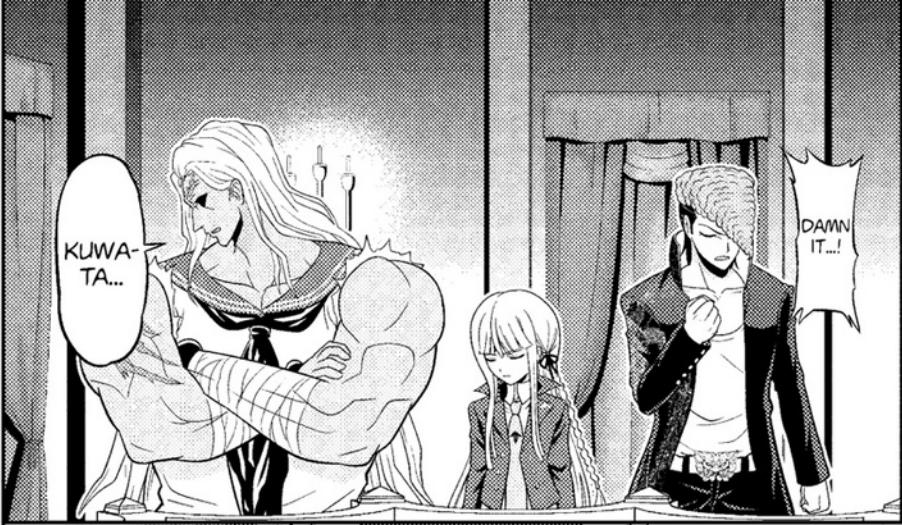








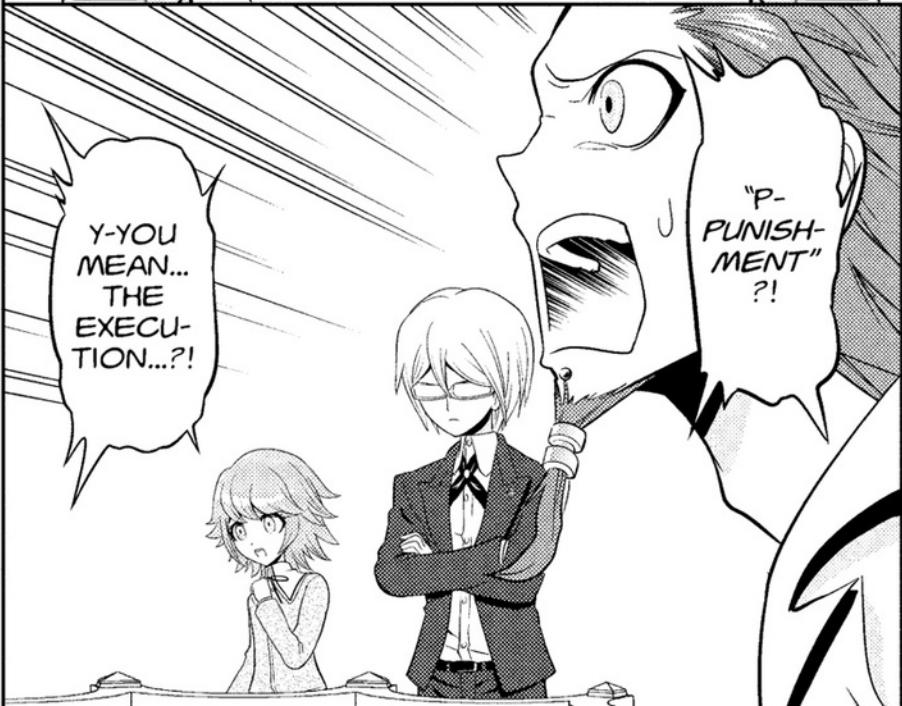
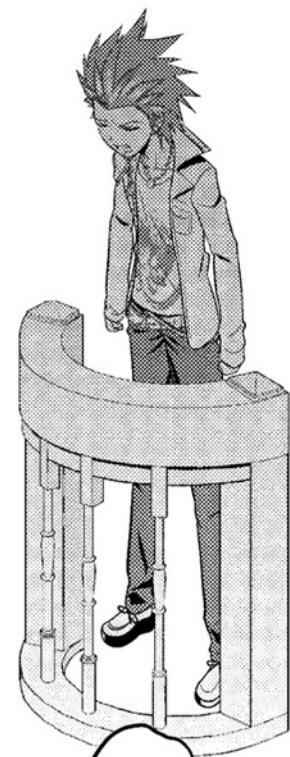




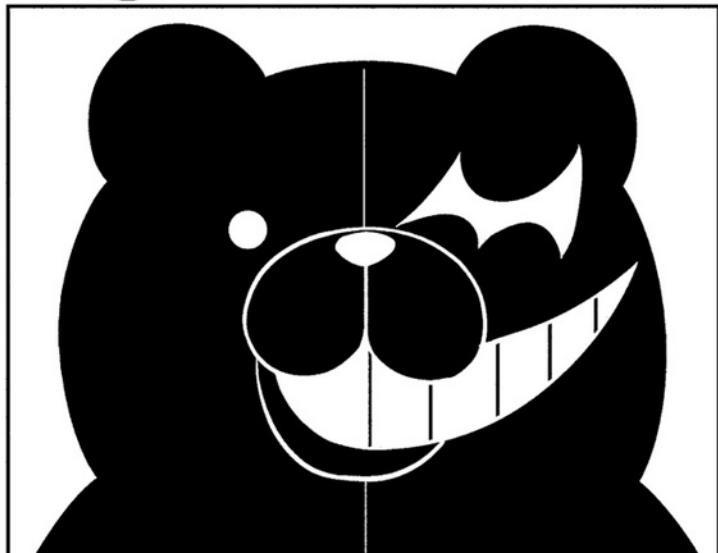
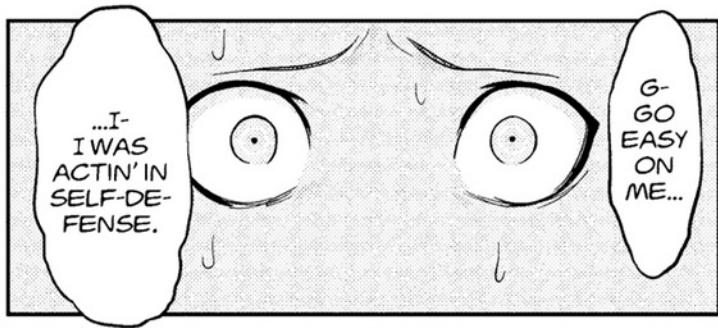
MAIZONO JUST HAPPENED TO PICK ME AS HER TARGET...

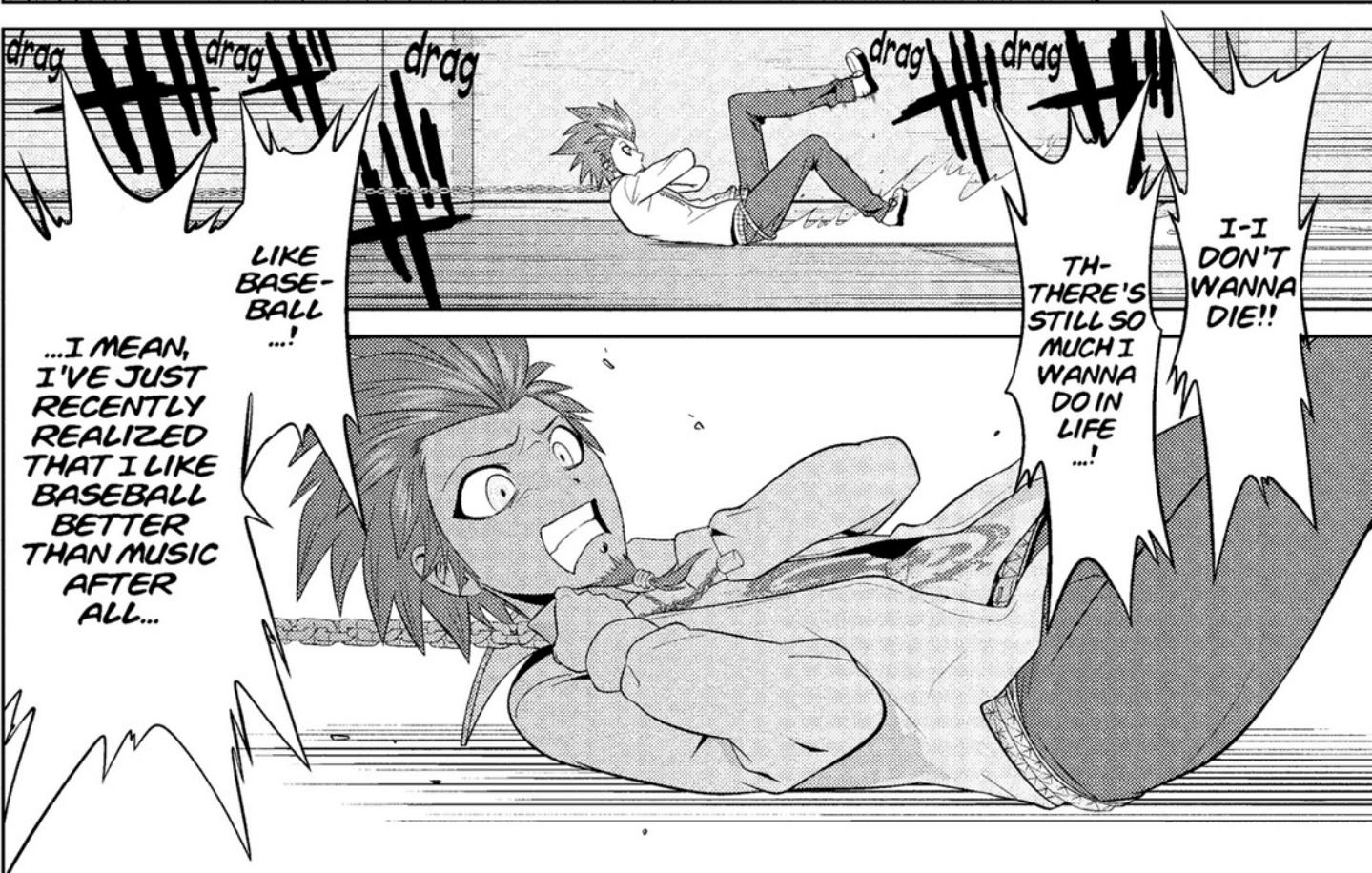
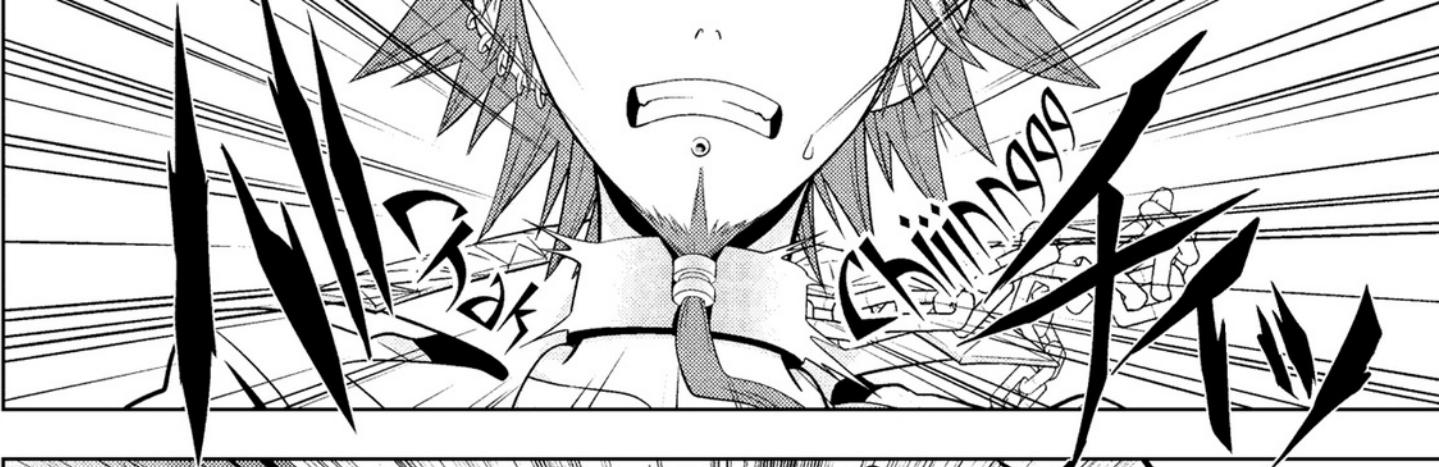


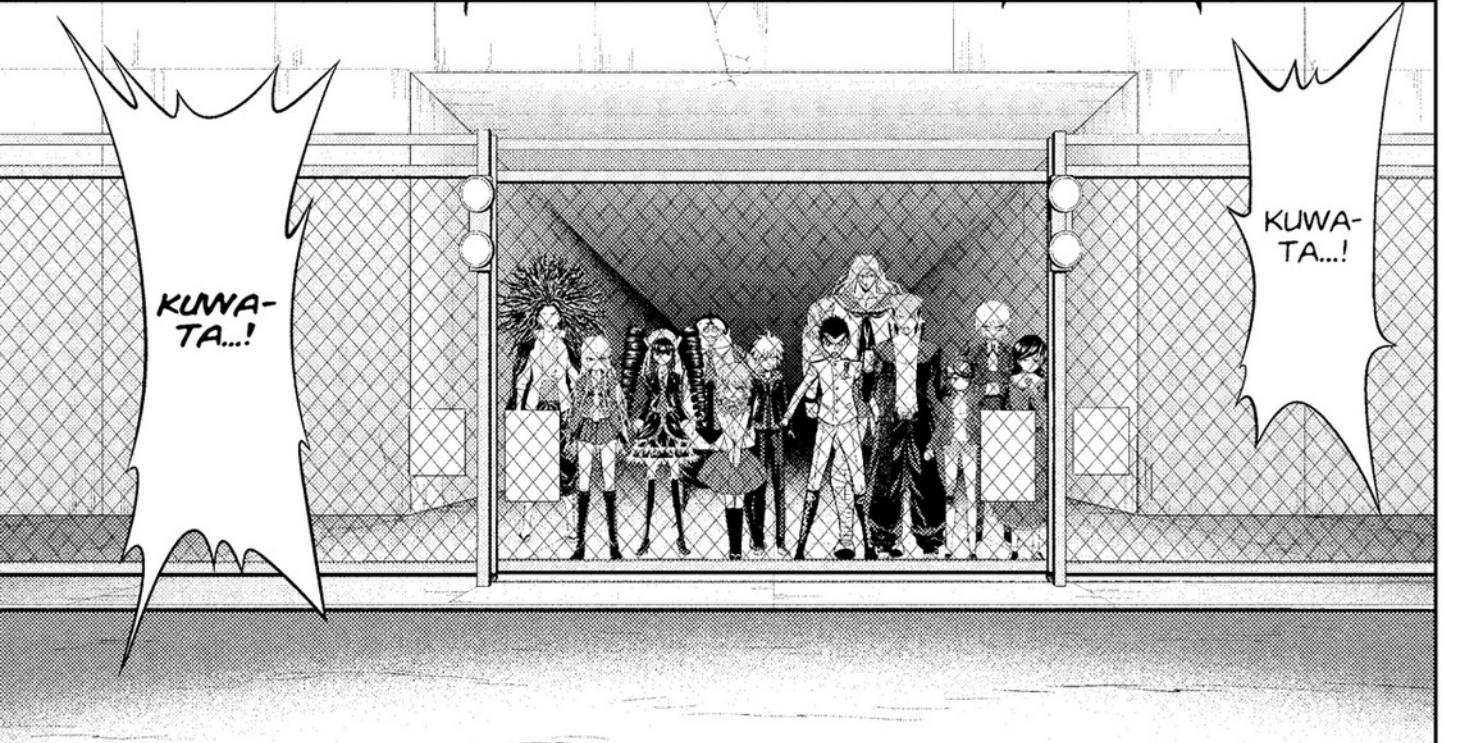
SO WHAT SAY WE PROCEED TO LEON KUWATA'S PUNISHMENT...?!



...FOR THE ULTIMATE BASEBALL STAR!
...A SPECIAL PUNISHMENT...







...I-
I'M
NOT
READY
T-
TO...

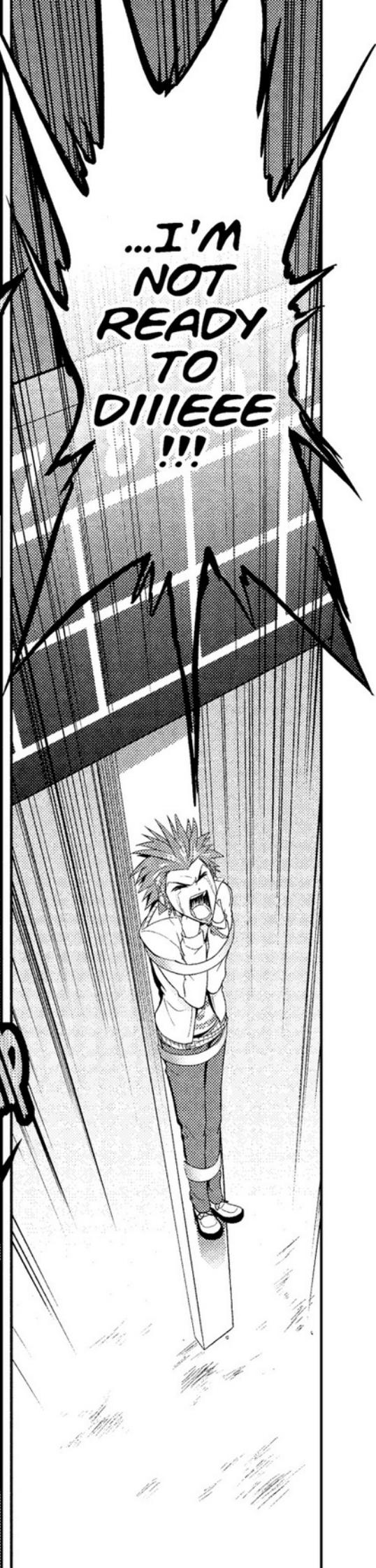
G-
GIMME
A
BREAK
...

whoom

whoom

whoom
whoom

whoom



FWAPP

FWAPP

MILLION
FUNGOES
!!!
aaa

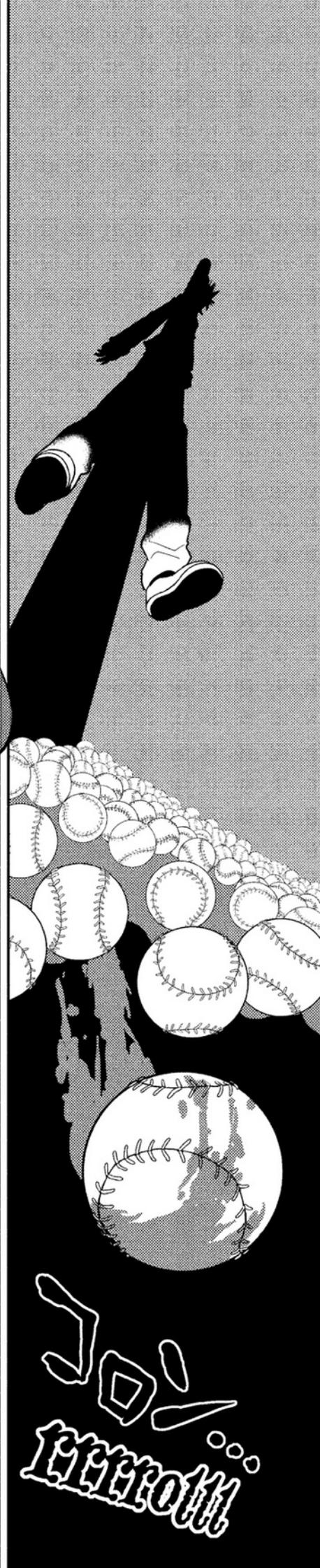
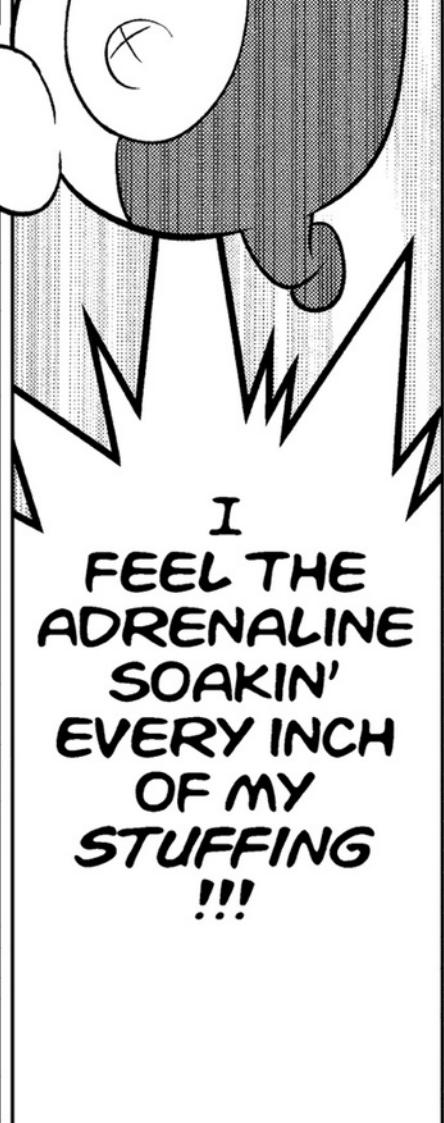
M 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
A 6 15 38 10 13 11
C 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

R 0 0 0 0 0 0 0



FWAPP

FWAPP



AS YER
HEADMASTER,
I'M MOST
GRATIFIED TO
SEE THAT YOU
KIDDOS ARE
FINALLY TAKIN'
THIS MUTUAL-
KILLIN' THING
SERIOUSLY!

THE
LOOKS ON
YER FACES
RIGHT NOW...
PRICELESS!
DESPAIR
ETCHED
INTO EVERY
FEATURE!

NAEGI,
THIS WAS A
GREAT LEARNIN'
EXPERIENCE. I
MEAN, FOR YOU
IN PARTICULAR.

U
PU
PU
PU
...

WHADDYA
THINK OF
MAIZONO
NOW, HUH?!
NICE AND
PRETTY ON
THE OUTSIDE...
AND UNDER
THAT MASK,
TWISTED
TO THE
CORE!

...SCARY,
THEM
ENTER-
TAINERS,
AIN'T
THEY,
HUH...?

AND
I DON'T
INTEND TO
PLACE ALL OF
THE BLAME ON
KUWATA,
EITHER.

...I'M NOT
GOING TO
BLAME
MAIZONO
FOR WHAT
SHE DID.

EVERY
SINGLE
THING...

EVERY-
THING...

...GET
ME
OUT OF
HERE
RIGHT
THIS
SECOND
!!!

SCARED
HER...
PUSHED
HER OVER
THE
EDGE...

SHOW-
ED
HER
THAT
VIDEO
...

IF
YOU'RE
SO
SURE...

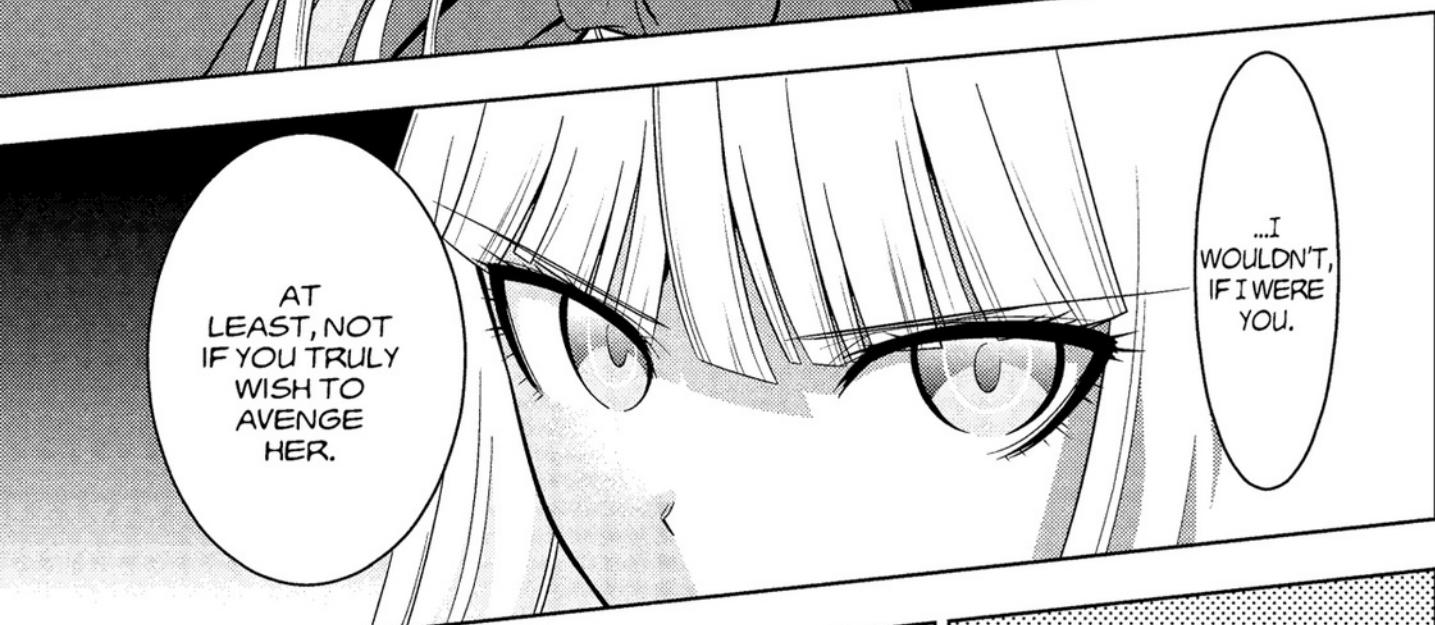
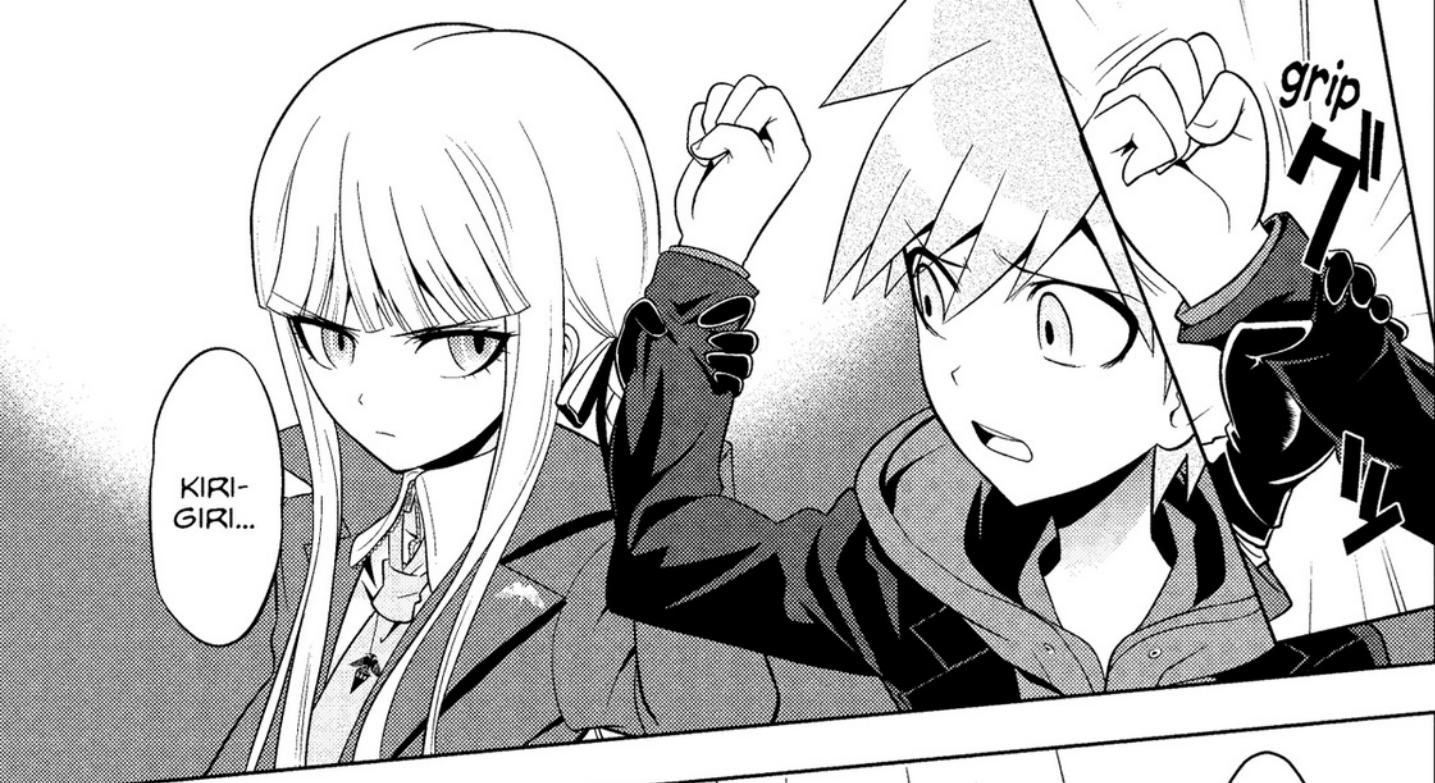
...IF
YOU
DON'T
MIND,
COULD
WALK
WITH
YOU?

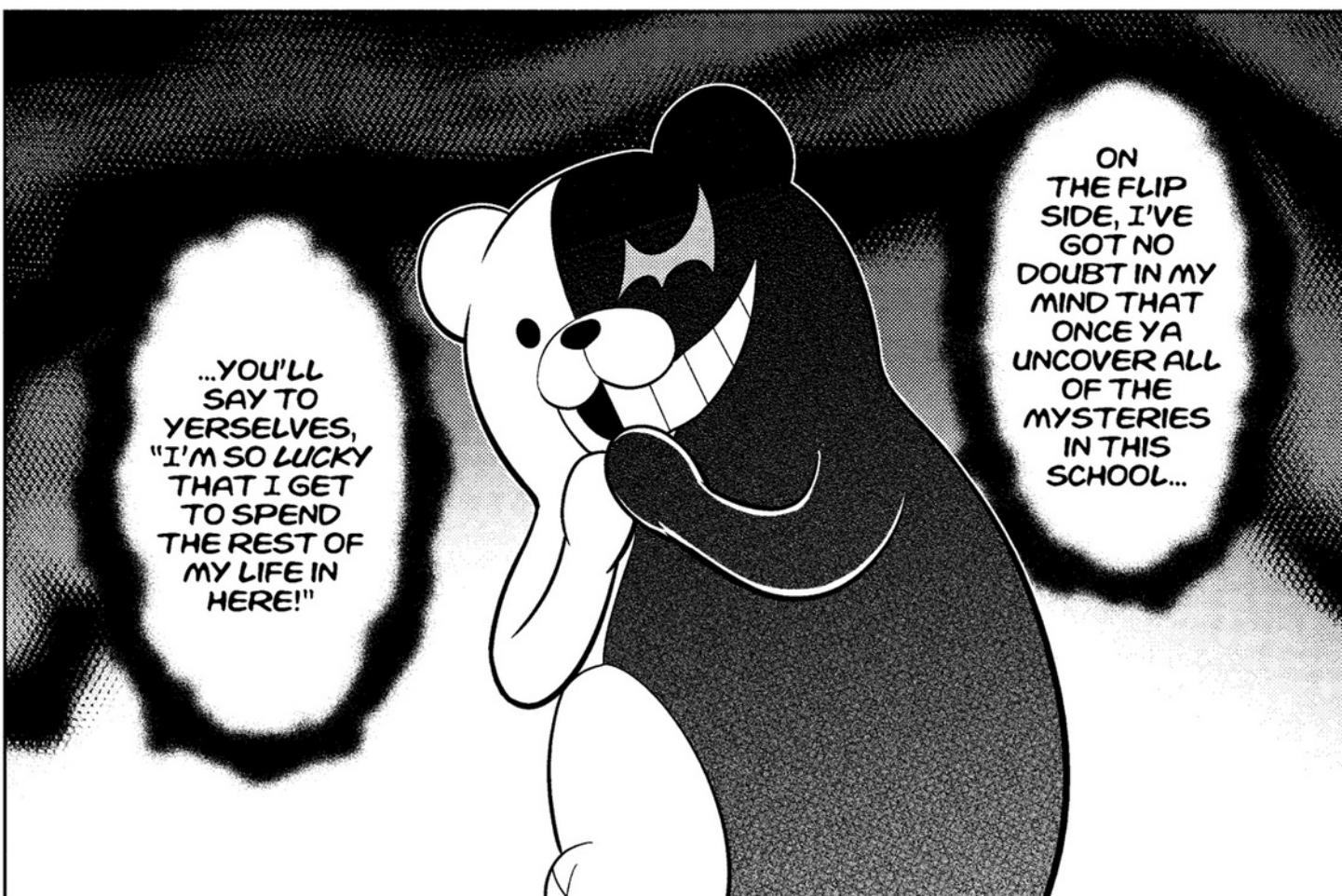
AND
THEN
SUDDENLY
YOU
TRAPPED
HER IN
THIS
PLACE...

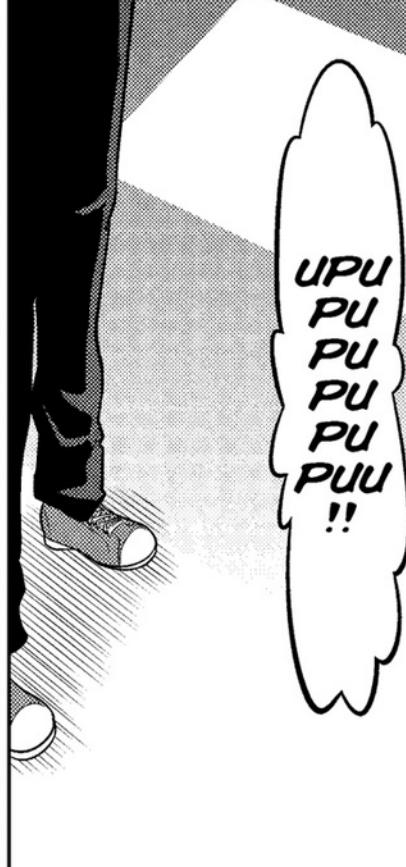
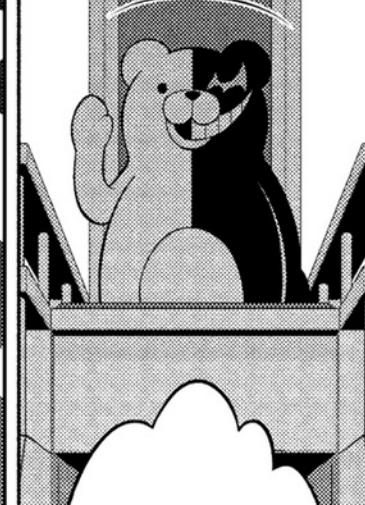
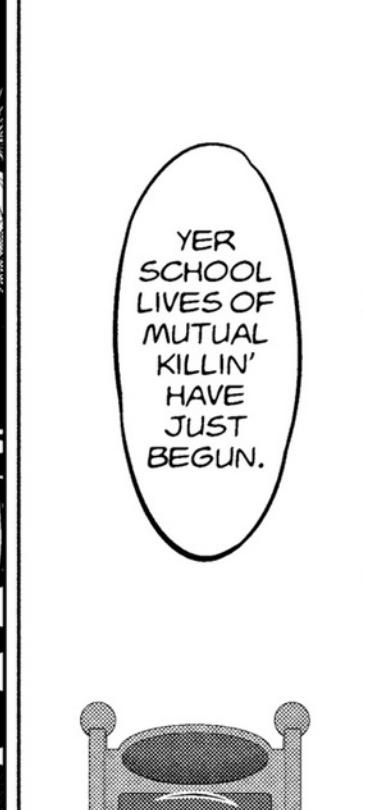
SINCE
MIDDLE
SCHOOL,
EVERONE
HAD LOVED
HER. SHE
BECAME
THE IDOL
OF MIL-
LIONS...

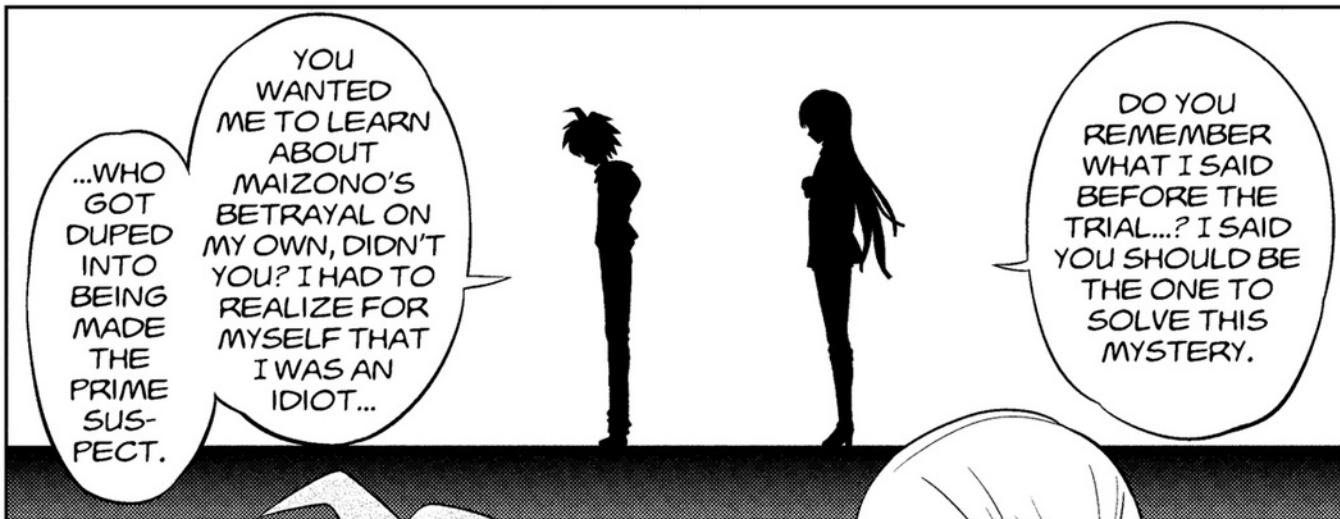
THIS
WASN'T
MAI-
ZONO'S
FAULT...

**...HAPPENED
BECAUSE OF
YOU!!!**











I
SUSPECT
SHE SPENT
HER LAST
MOMENTS
ASKING
HERSELF,
"HOW CAN I
SAVE
NAEGI...?"

BECAUSE
YOU CAN
OVER-
COME
THIS...

WHY
ARE YOU
TELLING
ME
THIS?

...BECAUSE
YOU HAVE THE
ABILITY TO
OVERCOME
THE DEATHS
OF YOUR
CLASSMATES
AND MOVE ON.
YOU MUST...OR
YOU WON'T BE
ABLE TO
ESCAPE
FROM THIS
SITUATION.



AND
I'LL KEEP
THEIR
FEELINGS
WITH ME...
AND
BEAR THE
WEIGHT...
AND I'LL
PUSH
FOR-
WARD
!!

I...I
COULD
NEVER
DO
THAT.

"OVER-
COME
THE
DEATHS
OF MY
CLASS-
MATES"
...?



...I'LL
CARRY
THE
MEMORY
OF MAI-
ZONO'S
DEATH...
AND
KUWA-
TA'S...
ALWAYS!

...I'LL
NEVER
PUT
THEM
BEHIND
ME...

I'M
GOING
TO HOLD
ON TO
THEIR
DEATHS
FOR-
EVER...



...THE
PATH YOU'VE
CHOSEN IS
FAR MORE
ARDUOUS...

I
SEE
...

...BUT
I HAVE
HIGH
HOPES
FOR
YOU...

...I
MERELY
HAVE
KEEN
INTUI-
TION.

I'M A
PSYCHIC
...

...HOW
DID YOU
KNOW I
WANTED
TO SPEAK
WITH YOU
ABOUT
MAI-
ZONO?

MAY
I ASK
SOM-
ETHING
ELSE
...?



HUH?

JUST
KID-
DING...

SURVIVING STUDENTS: 12

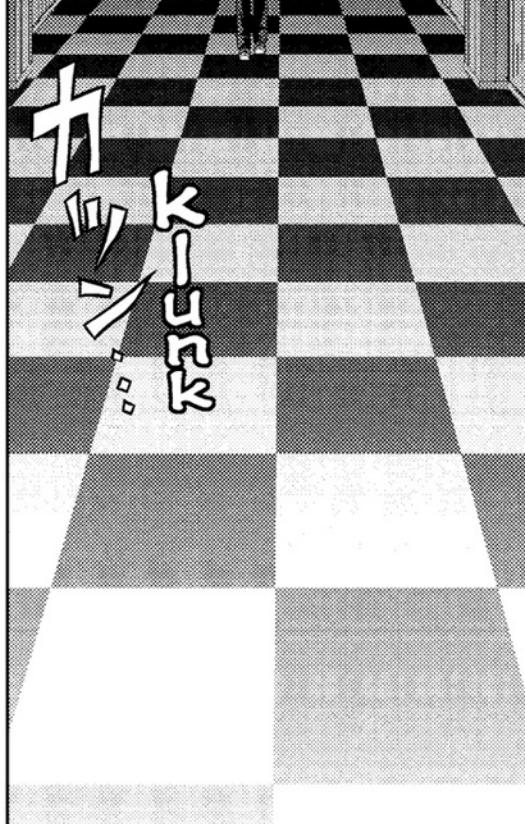
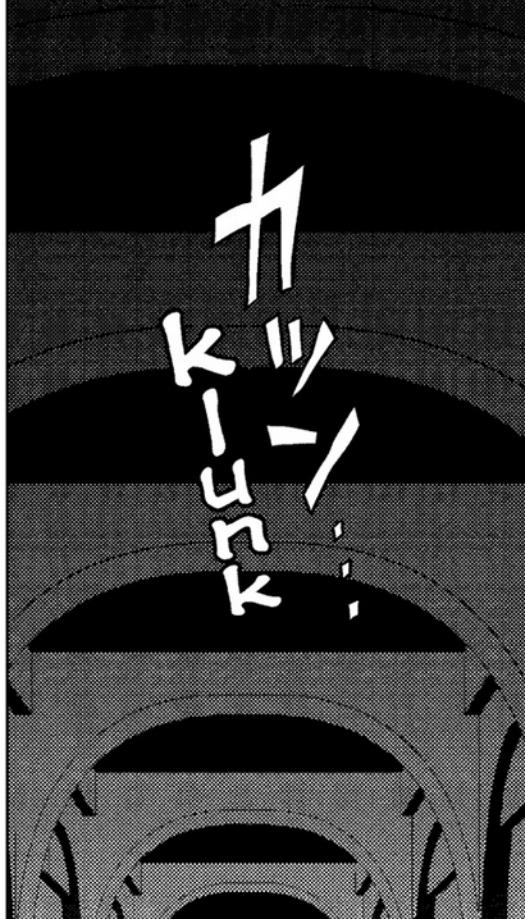
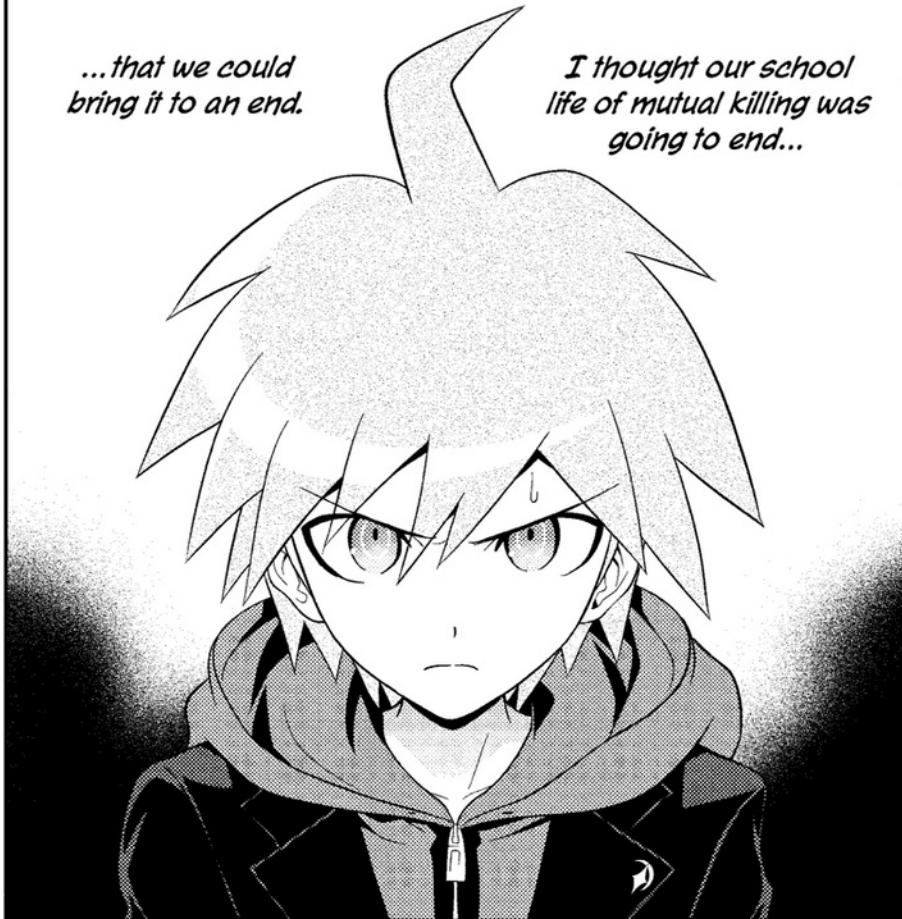


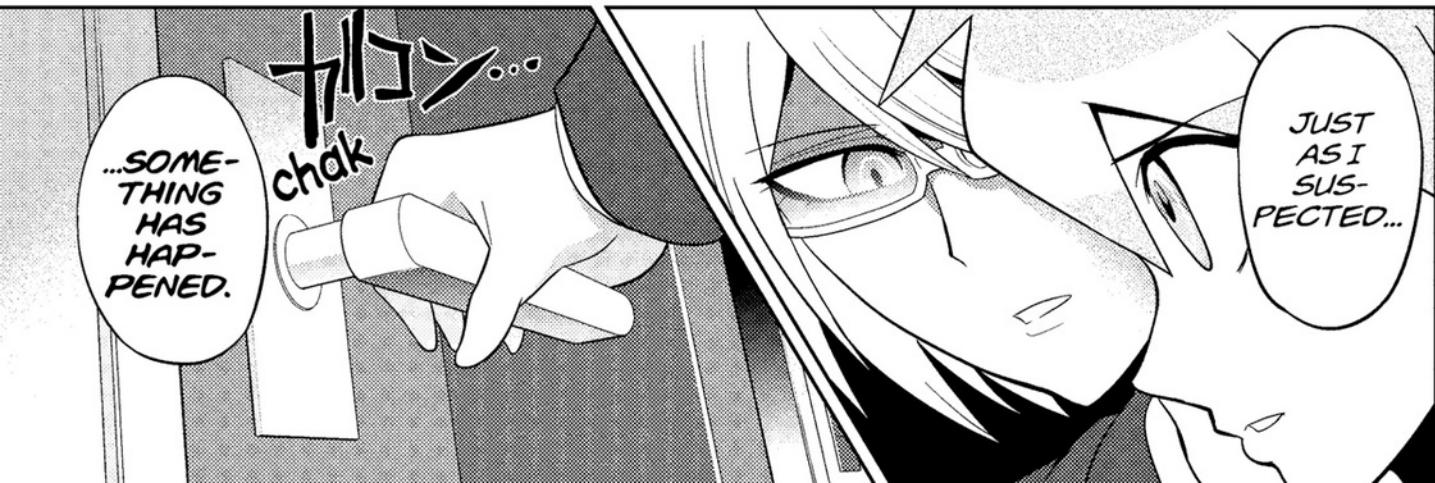
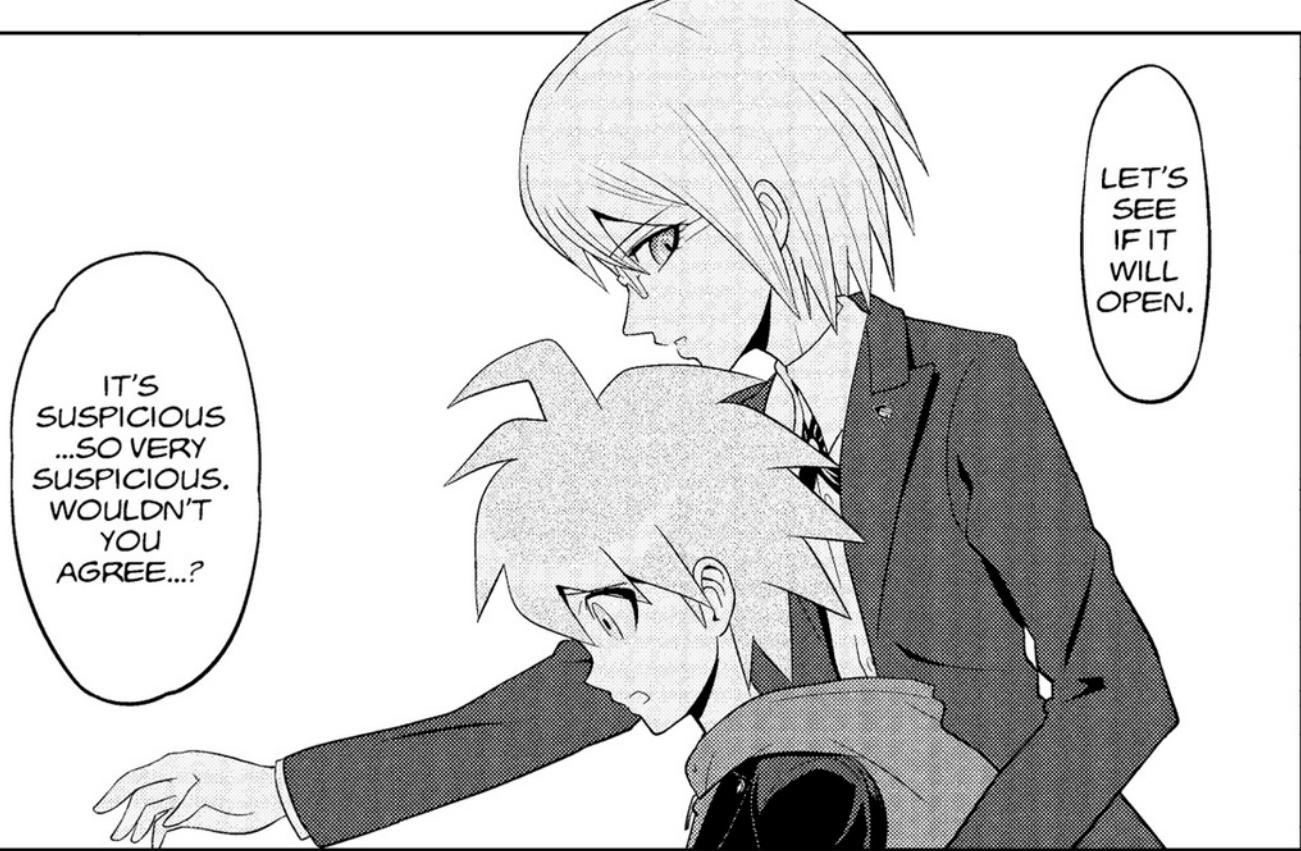
#04 END



...that we could bring it to an end.

I thought our school life of mutual killing was going to end...









But it
isn't over...

...our despair
inside the School
of Hope isn't
over yet.

U
PU
PUU!



CONTINUED IN VOL. 2

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SARAH TERRY

ultimate digital art technician
CHRISTINA MCKENZIE

English-language version produced by Dark Horse Comics

DANGANRONPA: THE ANIMATION VOLUME 1

DANGANRONPA KIBOU NO GAKUEN TO ZETSUBOU NO KOUKOUSEI THE ANIMATION
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DESPAIR MAIL

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Welcome to Despair Mail, the place for Ultimate Danganronpa Fans! If you'd like to share your thoughts or comments on Danganronpa . . . pictures of your Danganronpa cosplay . . . or your Danganronpa fan art—this is the place for you! Send it to the address or e-mail at the top of the page, and remember to use high resolution (300 dpi or better) for your photos or images, so it'll look good in print!

We have three fans who were kind enough to write in early to kick off Danganronpa Vol. 1, so let's start! We begin with a letter from Mark Zilberts:

I've been a fan of *Danganronpa* for quite some time now, and when I first got into the series I already had the unfortunate knowledge of the murderer of the first trial, Leon Kuwata. The reason for this comes down to the game's advertising.

The Japanese trailer for the PS Vita release of *Danganronpa* contained several shots of Leon being dragged away with chains. This doesn't leave much up to the imagination and as a result, we are led to be suspicious toward the character. What makes this worse is the roll call of characters that has everyone looking straight toward the camera—taken from the game as they are reacting to Leon's execution—except for Leon, who is positioned in a different way with his eyes rolling back. Comparing this to the original Japanese PSP trailer, they used shots from a different build of the game and yet still ended it with Leon being dragged away. The English trailer does the same thing with the roll call, but coupled with a zooming target/crosshairs on his face, just to drill the suspicion in further.

I understand that it is hard to market a game that falls into the murder-mystery genre when the trial game play is the main focal point, but it's a shame because Leon is actually a pretty good character. Through the free-time events in the game, we learn that he actually wants to go into music and is tired of baseball, which ties into the irony that one of the reasons he was caught is because it could only have been him—the Ultimate Baseball Star—that could have thrown Yasuhiro's crystal ball through the small gaps in the grate with such accuracy.

The original Japanese trailer for *Danganronpa: The Animation* did not contain any spoilers, as they actually

drew scenes for both the trailer and the opening that featured the entire cast regardless of situation; the roll call for the trailer featured Leon in the same style as everyone else and the opening for every episode featured the trial room spinning, with every character present. Unfortunately the same cannot be said about the English trailer for *Danganronpa: The Animation* . . . I recommend anyone trying to get into the series ignore all forms of advertising from this English dub for the anime; the trailer genuinely spoils everything.

There was a demo for *Danganronpa* that was only available in Japanese that acted as a spoiler-free way to let people try out the game. In this demo it was in fact Yasuhiro that died in the bathroom, in much the same way, except that he did not write anything on the walls like Sayaka did that led to the downfall of Leon. This leads to us actually getting to play some parts of the first trial with Sayaka being involved. It also hinted that the culprit for the first trial is not Leon but instead Hifumi due to various mentions of potato grease on the floor in the bedroom along with Hifumi's constant talk about potato chips. Although this is mostly speculation as far as I can tell, aside from a one-volume manga that apparently confirms it, it is still interesting to see the different ways that the series has been advertised.

Thank you for bringing this manga into English! I hope that it can bring some more fans into the series who might expand into the rest of the *Danganronpa* universe as a result. ^^

It can be tricky sometimes to promote a work without showing some of its dramatic scenes, which then risk giving away too much of the plot. We can see this in a lot of Hollywood movie

trailers, too. You're right about the conflict between trying to promote the "murder mystery" vs. the "trial" aspects of Danganronpa. Courtroom cross-examination can be dramatic, but murder is more dramatic still, and I guess you can argue that the murders come first in Danganronpa, because without the crime, you don't have the trial confronting the crime.

When Dark Horse advertised Danganronpa Vol. 1 in Previews magazine, I don't think we did anything to reveal the identity of Maizono's murderer (i.e., Leon), but we did reveal that Maizono would be murdered, by using the image of Naegi screaming at the discovery of her body. So you could say that we spoiled the murder to some extent (I say "to some extent," because you can't explain what Danganronpa is like if you don't reveal the fact that people are going to get murdered), but we did not spoil the trial aspect of the story, which, as you say, is the focal point of the game play. It's the trial, of course, where Naegi reveals his special strength as a character—and as a hero. We could also say, of course, that by revealing that Maizono dies in vol. 1, we were just keeping to the style of the manga itself, which reveals in the preview for next time that Fujisaki dies in vol. 2.

I was trying to explain Danganronpa to some people who weren't familiar with anime, manga, or Japanese games. I told them it reminds me somewhat of those dystopian young adult novels that are so popular these days—you know the kind, where teenagers are forced into a situation where they have to kill each other or fight for their lives. But there's a big difference in style. How should I put it? Danganronpa can be grim and dark, but it's not grimdark. There's a strong sense of the absurd. To kick it old school, it's almost as if you got Monty Python to do some YA dystopia.

Above everything else, Danganronpa is its characters. You can be drawn into this series by a single line from a single character, captured in a single screencap. I would be afraid that if Hollywood ever adapted Danganronpa, they'd never let the characters be as gloriously weird, bizarre, and individual as the ultimate students of Hope's Peak are. "Uncool," "cool," "ugly," "pretty," "nice," "mean," "gender conforming," "gender nonconforming"—every student still has their own personal style that shines through. Identity and labels are one thing—but personal

style is another. You sometimes see people who greet you in their profile with a long list of identity labels they put on themselves . . . yet somehow they still manage to sound like completely boring individuals. I like the Danganronpa approach better. Never mind those labels—have personal style instead. Don't give up all your clues about who you are at the start—if someone wants to get to know you, make them figure you out!

And that brings us to the "ordinary" Makoto Naegi, whose style doesn't get to show itself until he gets into the courtroom and reveals himself to be a natural-born trial attorney. This is actually a more exotic skill in the eyes of Danganronpa's original Japanese audience than it is to English-speaking fans. As you may know, Japan doesn't have the centuries-long tradition of cross-examinations in front of a jury that you find in common-law systems like those of the US, Canada, and the UK—Japan didn't even begin using jury trials until 2009 (instead, accused people faced a panel of judges), and even now the system still requires three judges to be members of the jury. On the other hand, members of a jury can do things in Japan that they can't do in America, such as ask questions directly of a witness. If you would like to see how a real murder trial might work in Japan (complete with clues and cross-examinations), check out vol. 13 of The Kurosagi Corpse Delivery Service from Dark Horse.

In addition to our first letter, we've also received our first fan art! The illustration of Junko Enoshima is by Shelby Goldsmith. The illustrations of Byakuya Togami and Toko Fukawa (also known as . . .) are by Amie Palmer-Cutter. Thank you both very much! And everyone else, please feel free to send in your own letters, art, cosplay photos, or anything Danganronpa related to Despair Mail! See you in vol. 2 (rhymes with U PU PUU!).

—CGH

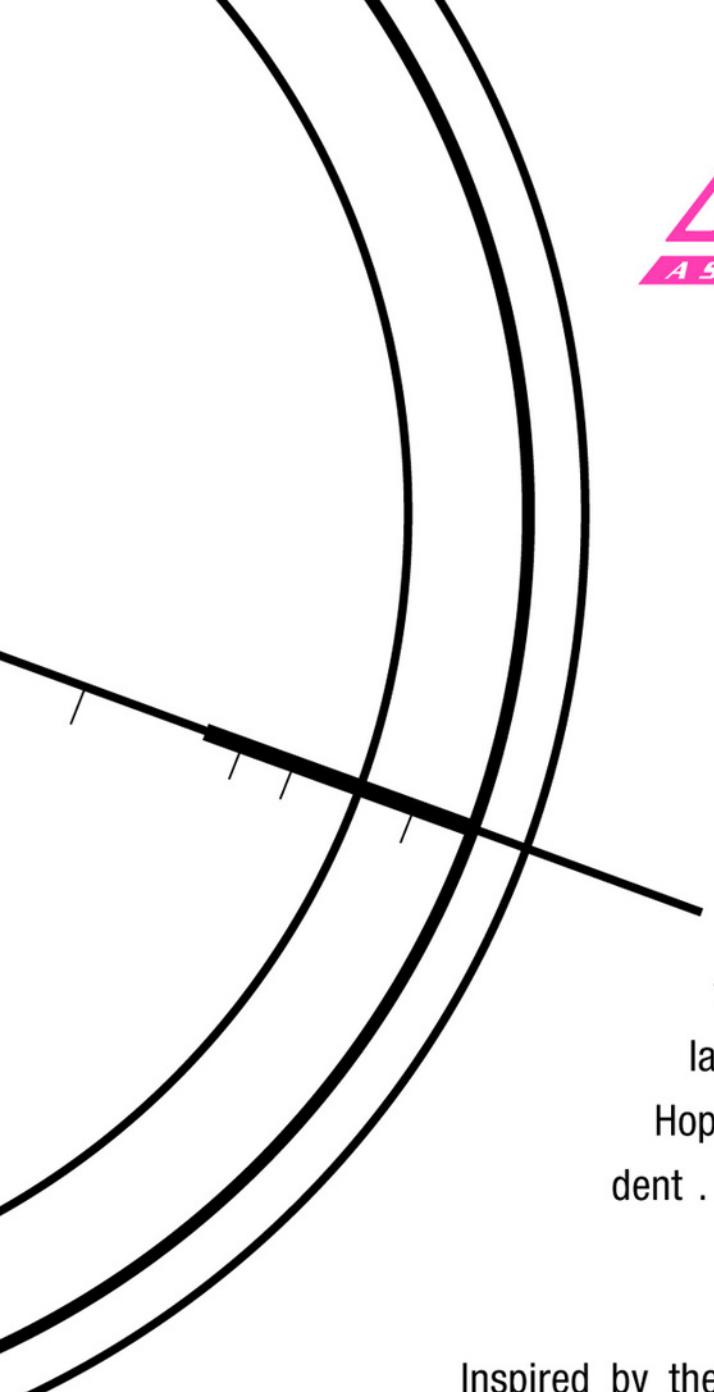
P.S. I'm sure many fans are aware of this, but part of the dark humor of Danganronpa is that in the original Japanese version, Monokuma is voiced by Nobuyo Oyama, most famous for the also-cuddly (but much nicer) rotund robot cat, Doraemon. The manga is making reference to Doraemon on page 20, panel 1 and on page 69, panel 2 (and also in panel 3 to Korosuke, another character from the creator of Doraemon).



illustration by
Shelby Goldsmith



illustrations by
Amie Palmer-Cutter



DANGANRONPA

A SCHOOL OF HOPE . . . WITH STUDENTS OF DESPAIR!

THE ANIMATION

YOUR FIRST DAY OF CLASS WILL BE . . . MURDER!!!

Welcome to Hope's Peak Academy, which selects only the elite . . . plus one ordinary student, chosen by lottery. Makoto Naegi was that lucky person—or so he thought! When he shows up for class, he finds the students are a bizarre cast of odd-balls under the ruthless authority of a robot teddy bear principal, Monokuma. The bear lays down the school rules: the only way out of Hope's Peak is to not only murder another student . . . *but get away with it*, in a tribunal where the survivors cross-examine each other!

Inspired by the *Danganronpa* video game series from NIS America and now on Steam. . . based on the anime series from Funimation! The first *Danganronpa* manga to be released in English has twists and turns of its own!



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